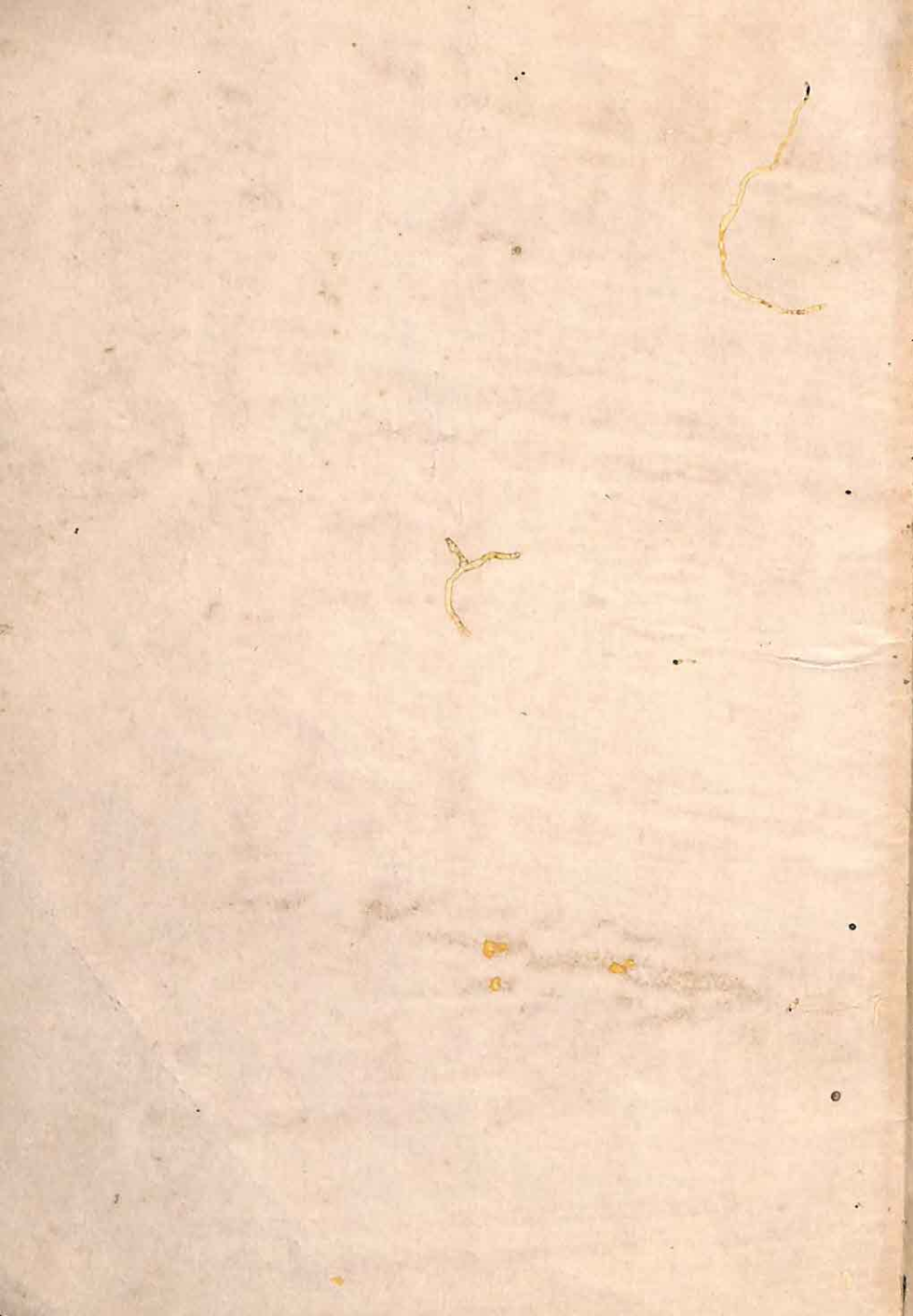
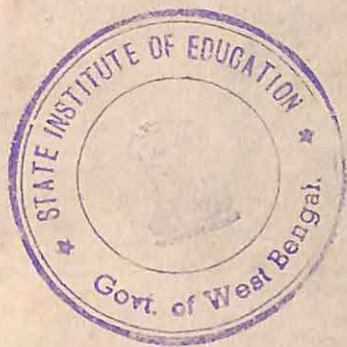


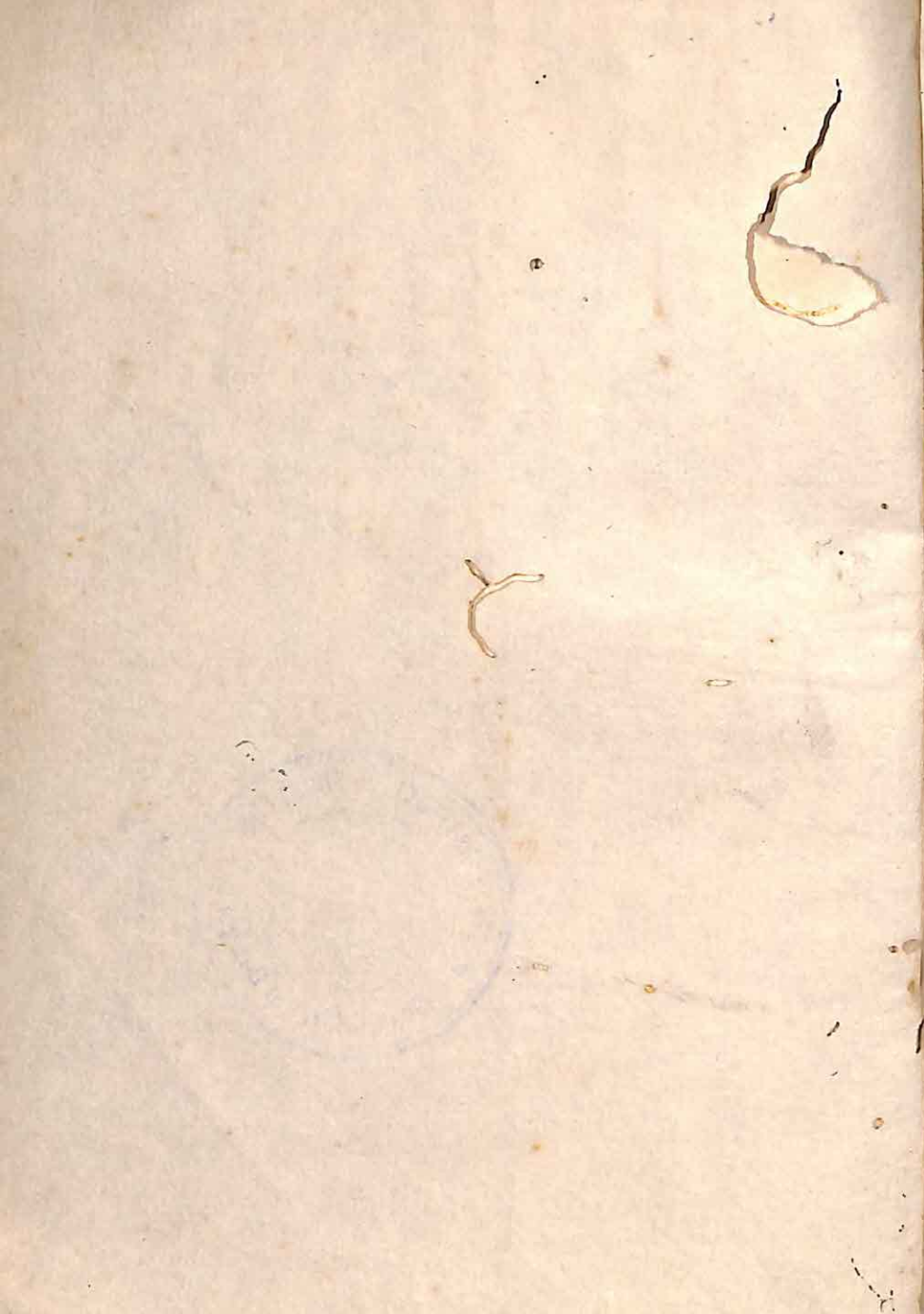
MODEL ESSAYS

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PREFACE

The book is intended to meet the requirements of the students of Higher Secondary, Pre-University and University Entrance classes.

The topics have been thoughtfully selected. A careful study of the essays will help a student to acquire for himself the art of writing essays.

It is a difficult art. The more so when the medium is a foreign tongue. In the pages which follow the student will find very good models of their kind written in a crisp lively idiom. If he takes some pain to follow in each piece the sequence of ideas—beginning, middle and end—the terms of expression, the word-pictures, the light touches of humour and fancy, the grave and serious thoughts when occasion calls for them, the build-up of the paragraphs and the over-all pattern of each essay, he will surely learn to write in a style all his own—with grace, charm, wit, force and logic.

It is hoped that the book will be of real help to those for whom it is intended. Suggestions will be welcomed for further improvement from all who have occasion to use, teachers and students alike.

Publisher.

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INTRODUCTION

1. What is an essay ?

An essay is a literary composition on any subject in prose. It is like the familiar talk. A lengthy talk tires the hearer. A dull way of talking leaves the hearer cold. In a familiar talk—the person talking should produce a pleasant impression. In an essay, too, the way of saying things should be light, graceful and interesting. The chief aim of the modern essay is to please, to amuse, to move, to edify, to evaluate.

2. Subject-matter of an essay :

A student may be asked to write an essay on any subject under the sun. It may be a piece of autobiography. It may describe a 'football match' or a 'prize-day at school.' It may be about 'the aim of life' or the 'cruelty to animals.' It may be a humorous sketch or a serious discussion of a scientific subject. Broadly speaking, essays may be divided into three classes—descriptive, narrative and reflective. But these divisions are not well-defined and clear-cut. 'A visit to a place of historical interest' is a descriptive essay. But it may awaken reflections in the writer. The biography of Mahatma Gandhi is a narrative essay. But in telling the story of Mahatma Gandhi, some discussion about his ideas may naturally come in.

3. Essays meant for an examination :

The essays written for an examination are different from the essays written for other purposes. Fundamentally, they are tests in composition. The examiner wants to know whether or not the student can arrange his ideas in a logical order and express them clearly in simple, easy and correct language. Let us see for ourselves what are precisely wanted in such essays :

(A) Ideas :

The examiner does not expect deep or original ideas from a student. What is wanted is that the student should write something sensible about a thing. When the subject for an essay is before him, he should not set his pen to paper and start writing at once. He should coolly think over it for a few minutes. Various thoughts will rise within his mind. He should put these thoughts on a sheet of paper. These thoughts will be materials for the writing of the essay.

(B) Logical arrangement of ideas :

(i) The next task of the essay-writer is to arrange the ideas in a logical order. On second consideration the student may find that the last thought has come first and the first has gone last. He should re-arrange all his thoughts logically which means that the first idea should lead naturally to the next. If the ideas are not recast, the essay will fail to carry a clear impression. Every essay should have a beginning, a middle and an end. The middle part of an essay should logically arise out of the beginning, and the end should arise out of the middle. An essay should be an artistic whole, and hence style is sometimes called the arrangement of materials in a systematic way.

(ii) The essay should be split up into small paragraphs. Each paragraph will contain a single idea. Within the paragraph the idea is to be expanded with suitable illustrations wherever necessary. When the first paragraph is properly developed, he should go to a second paragraph for the expansion of the next idea. This paragraph division makes for clear, logical development of ideas. It helps to avoid repetition of the same idea. If several ideas are thrown together in one paragraph, the whole essay will be a confused jumble.

(iii) It should be remembered that the essay must have a certain unity. Ideas should follow a certain order, observe a certain sequence. They are to be set

down one after another in such a way that they lead to a logical conclusion. *The essay expresses the personal point of view of the writer.* That point of view becomes clear, if the ideas drive towards a definite end. The essay is really a debate in the form of writing. In every school and college there is a debating society. A speaker presents ideas on the subject of the debate. He sets one idea after another and reaches a conclusion. In this way he wants to convince the hearers. In the essay ideas are written down from a single point of view. In the end the writer comes to a conclusion.

(iv) *Sometimes ideas are abstract. Mere abstract ideas do not carry much weight with us. They are clearly understood when they are brought out by suitable examples.* These examples are to be drawn from history, from the lives of great men, or from literature. Legends, fables or stories if suitably used may also strengthen a point. In a debate the students generally cite examples from real life to make a point in argument. A legend, fable, or a story may not be very convincing as a point in argument. An essay being a debate in the form of writing, legends, fables and stories should be sparingly used. But there is no hard and fast rule about it.

(C) Expression :

(i) *The charm of an essay consists in the charm of expression.* Even an ordinary thing becomes interesting when it is finely said. It is a mistake to use big words or learned phrases for the sake of effect. The language of the essay should be as simple and clear as the language of familiar talk. Hence the expression of an essay should be simple, clear, idiomatic and grammatically correct.

(ii) English is a foreign tongue. It is always difficult for an Indian to use it. Students may not know the exact meaning of big words or learned phrases. They may make mistakes in spelling them. Simple words are known to us. They may be used without any risk

of spelling mistakes. *It is, therefore, safe to use simple words in the writing of an essay.*

(iii) *Clearness is an essential quality in all kinds of writing.* There should not be any doubt about the meaning of what is written. The language used must express exactly the ideas in our minds. It should be remembered that clear expression is the result of clear thinking.

(iv) *English phrases and idioms are fixed by usage.* They cannot be changed at will. As for example, 'The child is father of the man.' It will be wrong to write, 'The child is the father of man'. *If phrases and idioms are to be used, they must be used in the way Englishmen use them,* otherwise the style will be un-English.

(v) *Rules of grammar are very important in composition.* Students will lose marks if they make mistakes in spelling, punctuation and syntax. To avoid mistakes in grammar students should use simple words and short sentences.

(vi) *In good English, colloquial language and slang have no place.* Decent, educated people do not use them in polite society. In examination papers abbreviations such as ; *i.e., e.g., etc.,* should be avoided. The words should be written in full, *that is, as for example, and the rest or and the others.* These abbreviations are a sign of hasty composition.

(vii) *In writing an essay the students should use generally third person singular or plural or first person plural.* Thus the students should write :—*it is said ; men cry for food : we live in a scientific age ; they say ; people hold the view.* Third person singular and plural and first person plural draw a gentle veil over the personality of the writer. First person singular indicates either authority or arrogance. A man in authority, like the Prime Minister of India, may use 'I' in writing and speaking. But an ordinary man or a student should be humble and avoid the use of 'I'. Second person singular and plural may be used by a teacher when he speaks to his students. That is, the teacher issues instruction or advice to his students, as for example, '*You should not be late.*' But a student is to learn and not to advise. Hence 'you' should not be used in writing an

essay. But in certain forms of essays the first person singular is to be used, as for example, '*Your favourite author*', '*Your last day at school*'. Here, the form of the essay wants the personal opinion of the writer.

4. Form or structure of the essay :

Every essay naturally falls into three parts :—
(1) *General introduction* ; (2) *The body of the essay*—containing ideas logically arranged ; and (3) *Conclusion*. These three things have to be explained :

(a) General introduction :

It means that the subject-matter of the essay should be introduced with a few general remarks. *No essay should begin abruptly*. That gives an unpleasant shock to the reader. A short paragraph should be written to tell the reader about subject-matter in a general essay. Moreover an essay should begin with a few *telling* short sentences. Long sentences having clauses within clauses like a nest of Chinese boxes have a depressing effect on the reader. Take for example, an essay like '*The Choice of Books*'. What should be the general introduction to this essay? The essay may begin thus :

"Books are innumerable. The printing presses bring out a large number of them every month. The book-stalls are full of them. There are books in public libraries and private houses. There are also a good collection of books in school and college libraries. It is not possible for a man to read all of them. Nay, one cannot read a fraction of them even in one's whole lifetime. Every man has, therefore, to choose some and leave out others.—This is called *eclecticism* in literature."

(b) The body of the essay :

The general introduction will fill one short paragraph in the beginning. Then will follow the ideas logically arranged in different paragraphs. Let us

again see how the ideas on '*The Choice of Books*' are to be set down in this part of the essay. First, we may write that there are good books and bad books. Good books give us correct information and lead us aright. Bad books mislead us by erroneous or incorrect information. They kill our time and waste our energy. So good books should be selected. This point should form one full paragraph. Secondly, we may write that tastes differ from man to man. One man has a literary bent of mind. He likes to read books of literature. Another man is interested in science. He finds delight in books of science. According to this difference in taste, books should be differently chosen. This point should be written in one paragraph. Thirdly, our occupations often decide the choice of books. A lawyer will like to read law books. A politician will prefer books on politics. A student will select books that will help him in preparing his lessons. In this way the ideas are to be set forth in different paragraphs.

(c) Conclusion :

This is the third part of the essay. It comes at the end of the essay in a short paragraph like general introduction. It means the summing-up of the ideas of the body of the essay. It may be put like this : Without choice of books no progress can be made in knowledge or wisdom. We find pleasure when we read the right books. We get the correct information when we consult good books. Since the span of our life is limited, we must not fritter away our energy in unprofitable reading.

This short outline will show how essays meant for examinations are to be written. "The body of the essay is really the most important part of the essay. It is the essay itself—the house to which the *introduction* is the front door, and the *conclusion* is the back door or exit." As the introduction should be arresting and pertinent to the subject and should kindle and arouse interest, the conclusion should satisfy it. An effective, satisfying and moving end to an essay is as important as an arresting beginning. But a too abrupt or too

feeble or too laconic conclusion may totally spoil the whole effect of the essay which has otherwise been powerfully written. The conclusion should be an epitome of the whole essay.

5. Style :

In fine, students should constantly strive hard to acquire a simple, direct, forceful and elegant style. But such a style does not come by nature, but by constant unflagging efforts and practice. As Pope says,

“True ease in writing comes out by art, not chance ;
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.”

An appropriate and powerful style enhances the value of an essay. A good style must therefore be cultivated by the study of the great master of English language.

In writing essays—particularly school and college examination essays—students should be direct, concise and natural in their approach.

ESSAYS

My Home

Points : 1—Introduction. 2—Description of surroundings and houses. 3—Conclusion.

1. There are few things which I like better than the cosy, little home I live in. I live there with my parents, and my near and dear ones. It is a nest of love and peace. You may see the house over there. You can reach the place by a narrow lane through the mango groves. It stands just a hundred yards from the main road of the village, and on the north bank of a big piece of water called *Ranisayar*.

2. Everything is beautiful about my home. The water is gay with lotuses in the autumn. The banks overgrown with bamboo clumps, banana groves and

decked with flower plants. Here and there are green patches of vegetables. We get a good portion of our kitchen greens from there. We get our supply of fish from our Ranisayar which seems to have a plentiful stock. Father has two milch cows that give us milk, and he keeps a flock of ducks that give us eggs. The ducks swim merrily in the water and feed on water snails.

Our house has two bed-rooms, one drawing-room, a kitchen and a store—built with mud and thatched with straw. At the back of our house there is a yard. In the middle of the yard we have four granaries well-stocked with paddy. This is the store of our food for the year. In a corner there is a *Tulsi* plant on a mud platform. Mother lights an oil lamp there when the sun is low in the western horizon. In the evening we all say our prayers there.

3. My mother keeps house and looks after the little ones. She does the cooking and serves the meals. In a way she is always busy. She has to do some washing, too. We are not very rich. My father works in a factory in the town five miles away. He goes there and returns by bus every day. On Sundays he sometimes takes me to town, and I help him in shopping. When I return, I bring a packet of lozenges or biscuits for my younger brothers and sisters. They receive me at the door with beaming faces. These happy moments and these sweet faces are the real blessings of our home life. And I pray to God that He may keep my home free from sin and sorrow.

The Pedlar

Points: 1.—The ways of the Pedlar, a shop and a sales man. 2—How he moves. 3—Conclusion.

1. Everybody knows a pedlar and his ways. He is a familiar figure both in the village and in the city. He brings so many nice and useful things to our very door-steps. He thus plays his part in the world-wide net-work of commerce. There are thousands of pedlars

in our land. They sell a variety of things which we would not get at one shop. Thus they save our time and labour, and money too, because the things they sell are cheaper than those sold in the shops. How can they sell things so cheap? They can, because they do not have to pay any rent for a shop or wages to a salesman. A Pedlar is a moving shop and a salesman combined.

2. Here comes the pedlar, his voice is in the air. He comes everywhere at all hours with his pack of wares. He walks along the streets, crying his goods, and turns round the corner and comes out again from a lane. And he has always a band of children running after him to buy lozenges, biscuits, tops and marbles, and what not. The girls get their hair-pins and ribbons from him. The house-wives are the best buyers; they buy their knitting outfit, and toilet goods, and lengths of printed cloths, and everything they find handy in the pedlar's pack of wares.

3. The pedlar is welcome to every door. But he is not always happy. He cannot do his trade well in the rainy season. The children are also sad when they cannot see him come or hear his bell which he rings every now and then. The house-wife is sulky when she is not in funds to buy a frock of new design for her little daughter. When the day is bright the pedlar drives a brisk trade. We can see him standing before the school-gate, or before the window of a house. Soon he moves on, and steps into another street.

The Bicycle

Points: 1. Bicycle or push-bike, a boon to the average people, a handy, useful and popular transport. 2—Invention of modern push-bike. 3—Cycle ride, a good exercise and a nice recreation. 4—Conclusion.

1. The bicycle or push-bike has been a real boon to the average man since its invention. Its good points are obvious. It is inexpensive. Its maintenance costs are next to nil. It needs hardly any parking space. It is a very handy transport and almost trouble-free.

Youngsters use this cheap and comfortable transport for going to school and college. Grown-ups use it for going to their places of work. In most of the industrial towns of our country we find at peak hours of traffic, an almost endless stream of cyclists on the roads. This proves how useful and popular the cycle is as means of transport. In our country very few people are rich enough to afford a motor-car or even a motor-bike. So for a long time yet, we shall have to depend on the push-bike for going about in our work with reasonable speed.

2. Harry Lawson was the inventor of the modern push-bike and it was put on the market on a commercial-scale by 1879. A few years later, J. B. Dunlop introduced the pneumatic tyre giving the cyclist more comfort. Cycles with a "Drop-frame" design are also manufactured to suit the convenience of ladies. The three-speed gear has also been a very useful invention for the cyclist. It makes hill-climbing easier for him.

3. When a young first learns to ride his push-bike after many falls and bruises he gets a real thrill. He feels a sense of power with his command of speed. A cycle-ride, apart from other things, can be a very good exercise and a nice recreation.

4. It is said that the bicycle for the first time brought the city close to the village. The jaded city-clerk in a congested town can run away to the countryside on his cycle on holidays. He can fill his lungs with the fresh air of the country, sweet with the scent of new-mown hay, and upturned fields. He can sit by the side of a stream or *dighi*, plucking flowers. Our city dwellers too may get the same treat for themselves on their week-ends and feel fresh and bright for the whole week.

The Motor Car

Points: 1—Motor car necessary for speed and comfort. 2—Its early invention. 3—Some well-known cars. 4—Conclusion.

1. In the United States of America most of the families own a car or even two cars. In this country most of the people cannot even dream of that kind of luxury. Only the very rich among us can afford a car. So far as surface transport goes, for speed and comfort the cars are still the best we have got. There may come a time, when every rich man will have his own helicopter, kept in a hanger on the roof-top. But that day is still very far off.

2. The motor car of to-day was made possible only by the invention of the internal combustion engine. It required no boiler, no coal. In 1876 a German, Nicholas Otto made a gas-engine for driving a car. It was rather slow. Otto had a clever assistant, Daimler, who later made a better engine which was petrol-driven. This was much lighter and ran faster. Next Daimler made another engine and fitted it to a bicycle which he rode about on the streets of his town. Other brilliant inventors made their contributions towards perfecting the motor car. Among them was Volta, with his battery, Faraday with his dynamo, and the metallurgists who invented new alloys which are both strong and durable.

3. For comfort, speed and elegance the modern cars are well-nigh perfect. Among the more well-known cars are Rolls-Royce, Vauxhall, Plymouth, Ford, Austin and Chevrolet of foreign make and Hindustan and Ambassador of our own country. All these are beautiful models, well-sprung, fitted with shock-absorbers against bumps and jolts and most elegantly upholstered.

4. The motor car engine is one of the greatest of man's inventions. Someone observes about it, 'Nothing in history has developed with such astonishing rapidity, or has created such great wealth in such a short time.' The motor car has made the business of living much more convenient and efficient than ever it was. Man

can now move about quickly. He can attend to his business with despatch. He can go on pleasure trips to beautiful lakes or hills in his car. He can go on exploring. He can convey goods to distant markets. It is thus one of the factors which has made man's progress and welfare possible.

The Writing Pen

Points: 1—Introduction—early history. 2—Invention of metallic pen. 3—Conclusion.

1. The pen is one of the simplest of man's tools. There is nothing grand about it. It is however wonderful to think what man owes to this insignificant tool. In fact man owes his whole civilization to it. In the oldest days before man learnt to write, all his knowledge—his poetry, philosophy and science—passed from lip to lip, knowledge was only a tradition. Naturally it was a good deal limited—limited by the capacity of human memory. We could not have either Shakespeare's poetry or Newton's mathematics if they did not write down all that they thought or imagined. Not a single book would have got written if man did not early discover this writing tool.

2. The pen has an interesting history. The earliest pen was the stylus, made either of hard wood or metal. The Assyrians and Babylonians who wrote on clay tablets used the stylus. The Greeks and Romans also wrote with the stylus on wax tablets. The Chinese in old days used a writing brush. The reed-pens next came into fashion. The reeds were cut to a point and split. This gave way to the quill-pen. This was made from the wing-feathers of geese, swans or peacocks. Its vogue lasted from the middle ages right up to the 19th century.

It is recorded that around 1780 S. Harrison, a Birmingham manufacturer invented a metallic pen for Priestly, the famous chemist. Later Joseph Bramah, an English engineer, made nibs from goose-feathers to be used with a pen-holder. In 1830, J. Perry of

Birmingham assisted by Mason began manufacturing metallic pens on a large-scale. Thus did the modern pen, as we know it, come into existence.

3. The manufacturers of the 19th century advertised their new steel nibs by way of this interesting jingle :

‘The Pickwick, the Owl and the Waverley pen
They come as a boon and a blessing to men.’

If ever there was truth in advertisement, it is here. There has been no greater boon and blessing to men than this simple and unpretentious writing tool.

The Clock

Points : 1—Introduction. 2—Clocks of the ancients.
3—Watch—description—working principle. 4—Conclusion.

1. We can hardly think of modern life without the clock. Most of us, even the children at school have to go by the clock. The workers at mills, factories and workshops are required to “clock in” and “clock out”. Offices, schools and colleges all go by the clock. So do the trains, ships and planes. The clock, in fact, rules the life of the world from pole to pole. We cannot help wondering how people lived in those days when the clock was not invented.

2. Again, it was invented not so very long ago, somewhere in the middle ages. Clocks of a sort were known by the ancients—by the men of Babylon and old Greece. They too measured time, though not very accurately, by their sun-dials and water-clocks. We had these too, in India. The machine clock, as we know it, was probably first made in Northern Italy or Southern Germany. Most of the early clocks were large. They were usually put up in church towers. They guided the monks in the performance of their duties.

3. A watch is only a clock made so small that a man finds it easy to carry it about in his pocket or on his wrist.

‘The clock-face is either round or rectangular. It is called a dial. A dial has two hands—the minute-

hand and the hour-hand. These move round the numbers 1 to 12, which are marked on the clock-face. They are written either in Roman or Arabic figures. When the minute-hand completes the circle once, it makes an hour. The figures are spaced out by five minutes which are marked on the dial. At the end of each 60 minutes, the hour-hand moves from one figure to another. It completes the circle once in 12 hours. In course of a day it goes round the clock-face twice. In some clocks there is a second hand, ticking off the seconds. It moves round its own small circle, somewhere towards the bottom of the clock-face. When it ticks off 60 seconds, the minute-hand moves from one mark to the other. The clock strikes its hours, from one to twelve, and repeats this cycle.

4. The clock is one of man's most useful instruments. It helps him to make the best use of time. The man who goes by the clock can do more work in a lifetime than others who do things in a haphazard style.

Domestic Pets

Points : 1—Introduction. 2—A few common pets. 3—How pets should be treated. 4—Conclusion.

1. We do not often realise how much we owe to these dumb friends of ours whom we call pets. Many a lonely widow lavishes all her love on her pet tabby-cat. The hunter has no better friend than a dog.

2. The pets are in fact the most loyal and devoted of man's friends. Unlike human friends, they never cool off, they are never jealous, they will follow their master to the ends of the earth. In their own dumb way they not only understand love and sympathy but also give that to their master in a much greater degree.

There are quite a few beasts and birds which are kept as household pets. *Cats* and *dogs* are the commonest. Among the birds, *parrots* and *mynahs* are great favourites. They are very good mimics. They learn even to call the children of the house by their names. Sometimes people go in for unusual pets just for the sake of novelty. We hear of people rearing

tiger-cubs and also lion-cubs and bear-cubs. Some even go the length of having a snake-pit. Pandit Nehru keeps a panda—a bear-like animal found in Tibet and China—which he takes care to feed with his own hands everyday.

3. Pets need a lot of care and attention to keep them in good condition. They would otherwise fall ill and die. We have to see that they get the kind of food which they thrive on best. The dog must have its meat, the cat its saucer of milk and the parrot its cup of beans.

4. Sometimes, it seems cruel to keep birds as pets. They are happiest when they have the whole sky to themselves. It seems so heartless to coop up these free wanderers in a little cage or chain them to a perch. The story is told of a prisoner of war who came back home after years of life in a prison-cell in enemy hands. He went to a bird-market and felt very moved at the sight of these little creatures fluttering in cages. To everybody's amazement he snatched up the cages one by one and set every bird free.

It is however too much to expect that every bird-owner would set his bird free. The plain lesson, anyway, to us is that we should be as loving and considerate towards our sweet pets, those dumb, helpless creatures, as we can.

Your Daily Life

Points: 1—Joy of living. 2—Early morning routine. 3—Home-work. 4—Teaching at school. 5—Evening play. 6—Night work. 7—Sleep.

1. The poet speaks of the "*wild joy of living*." Yes, it is really nice to live. Particularly when one is as young as I am. I enjoy every second of my life. How sweet is everything—the blue sky, the green rolling meadow, the cool sparkling stream, the fun and frolic, and the dear faces of all whom I love.

2. I don't have a dull moment from the time I get up till I go to bed. I rise, so to say, at cock-crow every-

day. I hurry through the morning toilette in a few minutes. I start the day with a sprint round the football field which is not very far off from our house. That warms me up and also makes me feel fresh and bright for the whole day.

3. Back home, I find the house awake and bustling. The breakfast is already served on the table. A few slices of hot toast and a glass of milk are all that I need and I find that perfectly delicious. There is a lot of home-work to get through. By the time I finish, it is time for school. I am hungry enough to relish every single dish that mummy cooks for me.

4. So off to school I go. The hours simply slip by all the time I am there. The classes are so lively. I feel a thrill when I learn something new. What is an ice-berg? How the Marhattas became a great power? What are the acids and alkalis? And so on. I wonder how much I have yet to learn.

5. Once the school is over, I am back home in the quickest possible time. I won't miss an hour's play in the evening at any cost. All my best friends turn up in the field everyday without fail. It is such good fun to kick about a ball. I feel just wonderful after play with my body streaming with sweat. It gives me all the glow and warmth of health.

6. At night I do a solid bit of mental work. I sit up over my books and notes for a couple of hours—reading and thinking.

7. By ten I am fast asleep, well tired in body and mind. It is mostly a dreamless sleep. When I dream at all, it is the sweetest possible dream of all the glorious things I would like to do.

A Tea Party

Points: 1—Introduction. 2—Invitation. 3—Arrangement and decoration of venue. 4—Guests. 5—Entertainment. 6—Conclusion.

1. "Do you mind my giving a small tea-party to my chums at my next birthday, Dad," I asked father. He was very glad to hear about it. So I got busy. My

little brother and sister also took up the idea with great enthusiasm. They too would have a tea-party on their birthdays when their turn come.

2. I typed out a good few invitations on Dad's typewriter. My brother Samir was our errand-boy and went out on his cycle to hand over the letters.

3. We got a big hall ready for the party. We put a big round table in the middle with chairs around for about sixteen guests. The children made heaps of paper festoons and buntings having all the colours of rainbow. They hung them all around the wall giving it a most charming gala look. My uncle, an amateur electrician took charge of the lighting effect. He ran a wire round the room from a plug-point and fitted on all along the line a number of many-tinted bulbs. It was a master touch and made the place look like a bit of fairy-land when the evening came on.

Following the English practice, I ordered for a birth-day cake. It looked most dainty. I stuck on fifteen little candles all over it. I had just completed my fifteenth year and felt rather grand about it.

4. It was 14th August, 1961. The guests started dropping in by 4 p.m. Each came with a little present, neatly done up in a gay-coloured paper packet. I felt rather shy about it. Soon we had the full party round the table. The guests helped themselves to all that lay heaped up on dishes for them—Indian sweets, chena-chur, sandwiches, singaras, nimkis and quite a few other nice things. The hall rang with shouts and laughter.

My sister Nita sang a few lovely songs. Samir played a few records. Ganesh of our class showed some card-tricks. Jatin, our wizard, did a few wonderful things. He made things vanish from people's pockets and later gave them back to the owners.

We next went out and had a few sets of badminton. We had also a game of musical chairs and finished with a merry spell of blind-man's bluff.

5. When we broke up, it was already dark. We had no idea how hours slipped by. Everybody was happy and cheerful and we parted with warm handshakes.

A Picnic

Points: 1—Nature—most refreshing. 2—A conversation.
3—Venue of picnic. 4—Picnic described. 5—Conclusion.

1. It was early December. The days were bright and clear. Here was a slight nip in the air which everybody found most refreshing. It was just the season when we feel like going out for a long ramble or look out for a picnic spot. Nature was so fresh, cool and inviting.

2. Saturday is a half-day for us at school. I had almost reached the gate when Ramesh of my class came up panting and a little red in the face.

"Jatin," he panted out, "you are the silliest and laziest fellow alive." "How so," I said, a little taken aback. "Well, you are always full of your plans but never go any further." "I am sure," I said, "that you are the better man of the two, but what is your latest big idea. Won't you come out. I am in great suspense."

3. Ramesh began talking fast. He had heard of a lovely picnic spot in the heart of a big Sal forest which stretches for more than a mile along the road which goes east from Midnapore town. Within half a mile of that spot runs the little stream Kasai. It shrinks to a thin sparkling trickle in its sandy bed at this time of the year. Ramesh's uncle had a station-wagon which he would lend us, driver and all. So off we went for our picnic next-day—a Sunday.

We gathered under a road-side tree—a dozen of us. Ramesh drove up in half an hour and picked us up. In another half an hour we reached the place. It was about 8 a.m. It was lovely indeed, much lovelier than Ramesh made hope for.

A foot-track led us to a clearing. It was absolutely quiet. Only a few birds were around, chirping and twittering. Sometimes a squirrel darted past searching for food. A few rustics would occasionally trudge along looking curiously at us.

4. We planned to cook on the spot. Our baskets were bursting with all the nice things that our mothers

had crammed them with so lovingly. Sosi undertook to take care of cooking. He prided himself on the quality of his kedgeree and roast meat. We dug an oven with bricks and stones around the sides. We started with a round of tea, gobbling up all the sweets, singaras, biscuits and toffees that we could lay our hands on. Some strolled about. Some were sent off to fetch water from the tube-wells in the neighbourhood. Some went to the stream for a good splash. By noon we sat down to hearty meal of steaming kedgeree and a heaped up bowl of roast meat. Everybody congratulated Sosi on his marvellous standard of cooking.

5. By the time we washed up, it was getting dark. So we packed up in a hurry and left. It was such a lovely spot and such a merry party.

An Excursion

Points: 1—Planning for an excursion. 2—Out on cycles. 3—Scenes and sights—a village—offered drink. 4—Villagers—return journey—conclusion.

1. We were very close friends—four of us, moving about together most of the time. We were all city-bred boys, living in Behala, one of the dingiest parts of Calcutta. Within a few miles of us, lay the wide open spaces on either side of the Diamond Harbour Road. How did that road tempt me all the time! Life in an overcrowded city can be very dreary, particularly for a boy. I felt so cooped up in our dark, stuffy flat, with smoke, dirt, stink and noise all round.

My friends felt no better than I did. We very much longed for a whiff of fresh country air. So we talked together one evening and decided to cycle down the long tarmac road and spend a whole day out in the country.

2. So off we went on our cycles at break of day. It was a Sunday morning in October. The days were cool and mild. We went spinning along merrily. We were already feeling fresh with the keen morning

breeze blowing in our faces. There was very little traffic on the road at that hour. We sped ahead as fast as we liked. We crossed the 18th mile-stone.

3. We saw just ahead of us a cluster of huts. It looked like a quiet sleepy village. There was a tea-stall on the road-side. Besides tea, it could offer us toasts and hard-boiled eggs which we found most delicious.

We followed a country lane leading to the village taking our cycles along with us as we walked. On either side we saw the paddy-fields, all green and gold, stretching far and away. It was almost noon. We were getting thirsty. We came upon a nice big pond. It had a cocoanut grove on its bank. We looked rather tired and dusty. A meek, gentle rustic gave us a kind look and asked whether we should like to drink green cocoanut water. Nothing could be more welcome to us. So he climbed up the tree and fetched us about a dozen of these cocoanuts. We had a most refreshing drink. The grass was green and soft on the bank. It was cool and shady.

4. We lay on our backs drinking in peace at every pore. Probably we dozed off for a while. When we woke up, we found a few kindly looking villagers from the nearby huts gathered round us. They offered us foaming glasses of milk and nice country sweets which their women made at home. We made a hearty meal and felt strong and fresh enough for the return journey. We thanked the good people with all our hearts and took the road back home. We filled our lungs with fresh air and were charged with a new life. That night we slept dreaming of green fields, blue skies, and bird-song in the air.

Recollections of Boyhood

Points: 1—Present condition. 2—Remembering early days. 3—Day-dreaming. 4—Father, mother, play and pranks.

1. It seems only the other day I was a boy among other boys. How time flies! I feel grown up. My father even sends me to the Bank to cash his cheques. I captained our foot-ball team this year against some of the toughest competitors. Our school won the shield. The captain naturally was the hero of the occasion.

2. Still when I think back on those early days, I feel a slight heart-ache. There is something wonderfully fresh and bright about our early days like dew upon the grass. I get so dreamy about it.

3. I was in fact given a good deal to day-dreaming as a boy. Sometimes I fancied myself as Captain Cook roaming over strange seas. Sometimes I was marching as a brave general at the head of my regiment with shots and shells bursting all round me.

4. I was a little afraid of my father. He seemed somewhat stern and aloof. I however found him unexpectedly tender at times when he would come home with a toy-gun or a big round top or a box of chocolates and call out for me.

I remember how I once had a bad accident. I was up in a black-berry tree, with two of my pals. How sweet and juicy were those little berries! Suddenly a dry twig gave way under me and I came down with a crash. I did not know what happened to me after that. When I first opened my eyes, I found my head resting on mother's lap and her arms round me. I still remember her tender, tearful eyes.

My father gave me a bicycle on my tenth birthday. I learnt to ride it in a week. Every morning and evening, I would go out for a spin with the wind whistling against my ears. I came home dog-tired every evening. As soon as I had my meal, I would drop off to sleep. I slept like a top. Nothing could awaken me. Those were wonderful days. I remember them at times like a glorious dream from which I have just waked up.

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A Day in the Rain

Points: 1—Gloomy appearance. 2—Effect of rain. 3—How spent. 4—Conclusion.

1. Today the weather is very foul. There was a heavy downpour last night. And it has been drizzling since early morning. The sky is overcast with clouds and there is no sign of its clearing up within the next three hours. There is a stifling gloom all around. Nature seems to be sobbing. My spirit is damped. I feel altogether dull and lazy. What shall I do?

2. I am sitting at my window looking out at the streets. It is now nine o'clock. The lanes are still water-logged. Those who have got to attend office are ploughing through them. Somehow they will reach the tram-lines only to find the cars not moving at all. In the buses people are packed like sardines. I can see some black patches,—these are umbrellas. Some have rain-coats on.

3. I too cannot go to school today. Most of the students and teachers will be absent. So it will be what we call a rainy day,*—a day wet with rain. In other words, it will be a day of no work at school owing to heavy showers which will compel most of the teachers and the taught to stay away. Those who will venture out will get drenched to the skin. But that is fun for them. I am not ready to enjoy that fun. What shall I do then? I will take my bath and meal and then sit here again. But I cannot sit for eternity. Something must be done. Ah! there comes Tarun, Tapan and Tarit—the school is already over. And now I shall have a merry time. I hate this rain, this wet day. We four shall sit in my study and read a book of adventure. Tarit is a fine story-teller. He can tell us some stories about the adventures of his cousin Ghana-da in Tibet.

4. It is still drizzling. The window blinds are dripping. There is a sad music outside. Hush! the wind is swishing among the leaves! Maybe the wood nymph is singing a doleful song.

*Rainy day--(Figurative meaning) an emergency; bad times.

A day on which everything went wrong with me

Points: 1—A horrid day. 2—A nasty trick. 3—Punishment at school. 4—Cracking of tooth. 5—Conclusion.

1. Everything went wrong with me from the moment I blinked my eyes open. As the time-piece rang its alarm I jumped out of my bed, slipped and came down bump on the floor. I narrowly escaped a sprain in the leg and kicked the floor in hate and anger. I went into the bathroom for a wash. To my horror I found there was no tooth-paste in the tube and a mouse had nibbled at my tooth-brush. In disgust, I threw them out of the window. I had to borrow a pinch of tooth-powder from my mother and finish my morning toilette as best I could.

2. Tea was waiting on the breakfast table. I hurried to the chair and sat down to have a few comfortable sips. I was about to recover my good humour. But that was not to be. My little sister Renu stole behind me into the room and rocked the chair in her usual impish way. It was a nasty trick. I was just going to put the cup to my lips. I spilled the whole thing on to my clothes and jumped up with a howl of pain and rage. Renu shrieked and fled from the room in the twinkling of an eye. I shouted and stamped, but nobody cared to listen to my words of protest and vexation.

3. I changed my clothes and went to my study. My tutor did not turn up. He sent a word that he had left town on a piece of urgent business. So I could not do my sums and an exercise on grammar. I went to school late, for the meal was not ready in time. The teacher kept me standing at the door for full five minutes—a target for everybody's scoffing and ridicule. The mathematics teacher gave me a piece of his mind, and the grammar master called me a silly ass.

4. When the school was over I made a short cut across the park. My mother had cooked some good pastries. I greedily fell to, but at the fourth bite, I bit no pastry but bit hard into a round piece of stone. I tingled in all my nerves as I spat out a broken tooth—

a molar. I sat bewildered with a bleeding mouth. Mother shrieked, and aunt went into hysterics.

5. I silently left the room, had a gargle with listerine, and went to bed. I cannot say if I slept soundly, perhaps I had bad dreams. But I do not remember them. Thus the day passed. It was a series of accidents, rebuffs and nerve-racking trials.

A memorable night

Points: 1—A loud noise. 2—Maid-servant's account. 3—The cook's story. 4—Anxieties of Mummy and Dad. 5—Squally night. 6—My detective instinct—conclusion.

1. Crash! Bang!

I woke up with a start. I found the whole house in an uproar. The lights were on. Everybody was out on the corridor—father, mother, uncle, all my little brothers and sisters, maid-servant, cook and even the dog was there, barking, jumping and wagging its tail.

2. As I dashed out, rubbing my eyes I found the maid-servant giving a most blood-curdling account of what she saw. She slept downstairs. Being a light sleeper, she was awakened by stealthy foot-steps going up the steps. She saw a black, hefty ruffian with a dagger flashing in his hands. Luckily, she could check her scream and the man did not find her. Here she nervously clutched the thin gold-chain on her neck.

3. The cook had another story to tell, no less exciting. He also saw a man. But he was tall, lean and bony, carrying a bag of tools for doing his burglar's job. He was in a great hurry taking three steps at a jump.

4. Mummy was in a daze, trembling all over. The children were gaping, their eyes round with fear and wonder. Dad and uncle were peering round anxiously. Where might the man be hiding after all? Uncle reached out for his thick black stick in the corner.

Father was armed with a big torch which he could use as a weapon if the man suddenly charged upon us.

5. The night was very squally. From time to time we hear rolls of thunder and saw blinding flashes tear across the sky. It must be a very bold burglar who could venture out on a night like this.

6. But where could the fellow be? And where did that big crash and bang come from? The box-room at the end of the corridor might hold the secret. My detective instincts were thoroughly roused. I snatched the torch from Dad and the stick from uncle and made for the box-room. I stood in the door-way and flashed the torch into the pitch-dark room. It was a terrible mess inside. A number of cans and trunks had toppled down littering the room. All that junk was piled up on each other in a highly unstable state of equilibrium. Suddenly a big black mass flopped down on the floor. I started and flashed the torch on that thing. It gave out a stifled "*miaow*." It was our neighbour's big black tom-cat, out hunting mice. It already held a fat, juicy mouse struggling in its jaws. The mystery was solved. You can well fancy everybody's reaction. Any way, I was the hero of the occasion.

The Neighbourhood of Your Home

Points: 1—Situation of the home. 2 —Disadvantages.
3—Advantages. 4—Opportunities for recreation and health.
5—Conclusion.

1. We live in a little lane off College street. It is a dark, dingy and narrow lane. If a car comes up, people have to squeeze themselves up against the wall to let it pass. My father has a hard time to keep the family going with the little that he earns. The two-room, ground-floor flat is all we can possibly afford.

2. It is not a lovely neighbourhood. I sometimes feel sick of the filth and stink all over the place. Somehow our people do not care enough about how they live.

Nor does the city corporation care enough. The dust-bin is not cleared everyday and rubbish keeps piling up. It gives out a frightful stink. Swarms of flies keep buzzing over the place. House-wives sometimes carelessly toss the garbage into the lane itself.

3. Within a few minutes' walk of our house is College street with its big traffic. All day long and late into the night it is alive with people each bustling about his own business. Trams rattle along. Huge double-deckers roll past. Streams of taxis drive up and down.

College Street, as is well-known, is the intellectual centre of Calcutta. The University buildings stand on this street. They are not very lovely to look at. But they call up memories of great scholars and teachers going back for more than a century. The Presidency College is another noble institution, which stands on its own wide grounds and looks very imposing. The Sanskrit College carries on the tradition of the age-old culture of India. There are other noble institutions in the neighbourhood—the City College of Commerce, Hare School, Hindu School and Sanskrit Collegiate School. The Medical College with its grand hospitals is one of the most well-known land-marks of the city.

4. The College Square with its tank (known as *Goldighi*) is a favourite resort for everybody in the neighbourhood, particularly the young students. Here they gather, chat or argue, munching ground-nuts. Some are seen jumping off the diving-board. Others are trying hard to build up swelling muscles in the gymnasium.

There are opportunities for intellectual recreation too in the neighbourhood. Either in the University Institute or Mahabodhi Society Hall meetings and cultural or musical soiree are almost daily held and great speakers and patriots, journalists and publicmen, actors and artists hold their audience spell-bound and merry.

5. That is my neighbourhood. Though I do not like everything about it, I love it still. If fate takes me away elsewhere, I shall surely miss it very much.

The Postal System

Points: 1—Introduction. 2—How the system works. 3—The early postal system. 4—A grand institution. 5—Conclusion.

1. Who is among us not to feel a little thrill at the postman's knock? He may by chance bring us news of a dear friend, a few thousand miles away, or an appointment letter which will make the whole family rejoice or a good fat parcel carrying birth-day gift from a loving aunt. It is wonderful to think what a huge network the whole system is, reaching every little spot on the surface of the earth. Somebody writes to me from Manchester or Hongkong or even an outpost in Alaska. The letter is sure to reach me if there is nothing wrong with the address and that again in a matter of days since the air-planes have begun carrying mails in our century.

2. You may drop letters into a pillar-box on the road or the letter-box at the post-office. A postman will collect them at certain hours. At the post-office they are sorted into divisions. The postmen make them up for the groups of towns and rural districts along the roads and the railway lines.

3. We have got so used to getting and sending our letters by post, that we seldom think what people did about their letters in the old days. At first, people had to send their letters by hand. It was very troublesome and expensive. The Romans developed a kind of postal system. The word "post" itself comes from the Romans. They ran a courier service along the roads which they built. They set a post at the points where the courier changed horses. To England, however, goes the credit of introducing cheap postage. Sir Rowland Hill had the bright idea of the penny post which came into effect in 1840.

4. The post office, in fact, is one of the grandest of human institutions. It knows no frontiers. It brings the countries of the world close together though there may be seas and deserts and mountains between them.

5. On the great Post Office building at Washington are inscribed the lines which is one of the finest tributes to the work done by the postal service.

"Promoter of mutual kindness,
Of Peace and of Goodwill
Among Men and Nations."

Your Favourite Recreation

Points: 1—Introduction. 2—My hobby—description.
3—Conclusion.

1. I have as fine a hobby for my recreation as that of anybody else and I think it is even better in many ways. I steal up into my own little factory in the attic whenever I can take time off and all that I do there is to make planes, more planes and still more planes. These are, however, toy planes and so nobody need look surprised.

2. It is a new hobby,—known among the youngsters as aero-modelling—which is catching on. It can be quite expensive. But I have made a very modest start keeping down expenses to the minimum. You will be surprised to learn how I make my little models out of the merest odds and ends. All that I use for materials are a sheet of cartridge paper, a bit of grease-proof paper, some tube-glue, a few match-sticks, a bit of card-board, a hair-pin and a strip of tin and a rubber-band. All my tools consist of a pen-knife, a ruler and a pair of scissors. I cut out the parts—tail, fin, fuselage, propellers and all. All the parts are glued together and the plane is fully assembled. It is quite a complex process—this business of assembling—and needs both brains and skilful fingers. The rubber-bands, a couple of them, serve as motor. Before the plane is launched in the air, these bands are given about a hundred turns or more. In course of getting back to their normal position, these elastic bands lend power to the plane.

I cut out different types of models—passenger planes, troop-carriers, jets, fighters, helicopters, sea-planes and bombers.

Some of my good chums I occasionally bring to see my factory. They cannot help wondering at all that they see before their eyes.

3. Little things lead to big things in life. I am following my hobby, I am already picking up a lot of secrets about aeronautics and the mechanical parts of a plane. I hope I am on the way to expert knowledge and will finish up in the end as a aeronautical engineer. I feel happy that I have chosen an up-to-date and interesting hobby which will bring me very good dividends when I grow a little older.

School-Life

Points: 1—School life—a second home for students. 2—First lesson in common, healthy social life. 3—Teaches virtues of punctuality and discipline. 4—Calls forth healthy spirit of rivalry. 5—Conclusion.

Students go to school nearly for eight or nine years. Except during holidays and long vacations they remain in schools for at least five hours everyday. They have their class-mates. They sit in the same class room day to day and take their lessons. Teachers go to the classes daily and teach them. They feel happy when the students can say their lessons well. They help them when they cannot answer questions or do their sums. They gently pull them up when they are up to mischief. In this way the teachers become their friends and guides. The school, thus, becomes the second home of the students. The teachers take the place of their parents. The class-mates become their brothers and sisters.

2. At School all students become united in a friendly atmosphere. There are, among students, sons of both rich and poor families. But the distinction

between the rich and the poor is never emphasised in the school-life. The rich and the poor students sit side by side on the same benches in the classes. They play in the same field. When a school function is held, all students work together for its success. All of them take part in sports. Thus, in the school the students learn the first lesson in a common, healthy social life without any distinction of caste, creed or wealth.

3. Again, the school-life opens the eyes of the students to the virtues of punctuality and discipline. Everyday the classes begin at a fixed hour. All students have to attend in time. Thus the students learn habits of regularity. The students cannot talk or make noise when the classes are on. In the reading room or on the cricket or the football ground, they have to behave properly. These first lessons in punctuality and discipline stand them in good stead in their future career.

4. Examinations are held from time to time to test the merits of the students. Prizes are awarded on the results of examinations. There are annual sports in schools. The successful competitors become prize-winners. Thus a healthy spirit of rivalry grows among the students.

5. The school-life, spread over several years, provides the children with the sweetest memories of their life. Even when they enter the world, they remember with pleasure the incidents of their school-life. Friendship formed in school lasts throughout life. The memories of teachers are recalled with gratitude and respect. The life in school is the foundation of the bigger and fuller life of later years.

The School Library

Points: 1—School library—its function. 2—Type of books available. 3—Its uses. 4—Need for a good library.

1. The school-library has always been a great draw for me. I feel at my happiest as I go round the

big room looking at the books on the shelves behind the glass-doors of the almirah. If the librarian does not mind, I sometimes take out a nice little book and I don't know how time slips by as I sit pouring over it in a quiet corner. Whenever I get an off hour to myself, I run away to this wonderful place.

2. The library has books for children of all ages. I came to this school as a little boy of class VI. In those junior classes, the teacher would choose for me nice simple books of stories, fairy-tales, fun and adventure. That was how I got my taste for reading and I have kept it up. As years passed, I found my taste getting wider and more mature. I now care for many other kinds of books besides story-books. I am still very fond of stories, no doubt. Dumas's thrilling stories of Monte Christo and Three Musketeers kept me awake till late hours for several nights. Wells' First Man in the Moon made me feel this earth old and dull and long to fly away to one of those planets shining in the space. I greatly enjoyed Mahatma's 'My Early Life' and 'My Experiments with Truth.' I came to love my country all the better by reading those books. I read with the keenest delight books of travel, adventure, explorations and inventions. One book led to another and with every book I read, I felt still more eager to start on the next.

3. That is the best thing that the library does for us. It stirs in us an eager thirst for knowledge, a curiosity to know more and still more. If a boy be allowed to read with freedom in a library, he will learn much more than what his friends do in their classes in routine manner. We need not however go quite so far. It is however essential that the school-boy should widen his horizon by reading a good deal more beyond his text-books. This he can only do by making free use of the library.

4. The library thus is of the utmost importance in the mental development of a growing school-boy. It should be well-stocked with all kinds of books so that the young reader may feel all the time how little he has read and how much more he has still to read.

School Magazine

Points : 1—The magazine how eagerly expected. 2—Get-up. 3—Contents. 4—Uses.

1. For the first time our school came out with its magazine, last October just before the Puja holidays. I happened to be its first editor. I feel rather shy to say that my first literary effort appeared in its pages. Each of us looked forward eagerly to getting his copy, the contributors much more eagerly than the rest. It gives one a thrill to see ones' name in print for the first time. We all feel like budding geniuses on an occasion like this.

2. It was a lovely thing—our school annual—in its pale green cover. The title stood out in bold blue letters against this light background and the school-crest a little below looked very striking. The get-up was as neat and tasteful as we could make it. We only felt sorry that we could not bring it out as a monthly. We had not funds enough.

3. It was full of good things too, from cover to cover. When I took it home, there was actually a scramble over it. Everybody wanted to read it first. Father read it last over his cup of tea and said it was a treat. I wrote a rather sentimental story about a lost dog and the grief of its young owner. But there were others who provided more solid stuff. A party of our school boys went biking last summer, right up to Bhubaneswar. Pulin of class XI came out with a vivid travel diary. Robin of class IX with his taste for history wrote about the fortunes of Azad Hind Fouz and how they had fought for freedom under Netaji's flag.

4. We all felt very proud of such a fine magazine. It really had its uses. It was something we could not do without; it was so much a part of our school-life. Some of the boys who would not care to write ordinarily, felt tempted to write just to see their names in print. We could thus discover talent in most unsuspected quarters. The contributors were drawn from all classes. There was even a corner for the juniors. So it inspired every student with a sense of unity. It

broadened a boy's outlook when he shared the very many interests of his fellow students in the pages of the magazine. Lastly the magazine is a good record of the intellectual standard of the students—of what they think and feel—of even their hopes and aspirations. So it was quite in the fitness of things that it called forth so much loyalty and enthusiasm from us.

Prize-day at Your School

Points: 1—An important day. 2—Certain thoughts about the day. 3—Last prize-day described. 4—Chief guest's message. 5—Conclusion.

1. I am not one of those lucky few who get prizes. Possibly, I am not bright enough or I do not work hard enough. But all the same I feel thrilled as much as the rest when the prize-day comes round every year.

2. It is a most eventful day for the whole school. Everybody is bustling about. The prize-winners are naturally the main centre of interest. They look happiest. It is not just a matter getting a prize. It is a public recognition of their worth.

3. The last prize-day is still very fresh in my memory. The school compound was swarming with people on a bright morning. Every guardian was invited. It was as much a parents' day as a boys' day. Some of them were particularly cheerful as their own sons were among the prize-winners. They all sat under a spacious canopy.

Every eye was focussed on the dias in front. The prizes were mostly books and a few medals. They were displayed, the books neatly done up with red silk ribbons and the medals in nice velvet boxes on a couple of fairly big tables. Sri S, a well-known science professor of the University came as our chief guest and gave away the prizes. A chubby little fellow of class IV was so over-loaded with prizes that he fairly stumbled and fell causing some gentle mirth. Some of the fellows felt nervous and stood gulping and tremb-

ling before the chief guest while he handed over the prizes. There was a ripple of laughter on such occasion. Asis of class XI won a large number of prizes and a fairly big medal. The teachers pinned their hopes on him. They felt he would win one of the top places in the Higher Secondary.

4. The Headmaster's report showed that the school had all along a glorious record with a few top places at the final every year. The Chief guest gave us a wonderful, stirring talk. By western standards, our achievements in science and technology was still negligible. It is upto the young people to make up this lag. We had to be creative and dynamic.

5. I could not help brooding over his words as I went back home. I wondered whether I should not take things more seriously and win a few prizes next time. But I don't mean to speak about my secret to my school-fellows.

Independence Day Celebration at Your School

Points: 1—Independence Day—its significance. 2—The function. 3—Memories which called up. 4—Its message.

1. Our country has been observing her Independence Day for the last 14 years. The 15th of August will always remain for us a fateful day. It is no doubt true that we did not fight out our battle of freedom against the English rulers with tanks and guns. True again that outwardly the transfer of power in India was peaceful. Still, in fact, we did not get our freedom as a gift. It had to be won by "blood and sweat and toil and tears" over long, long years. On this day we remember the patriots who died and suffered so that the country might be free.

2. This was what our Headmaster more or less said as he unfurled the tricolour flag in the morning air. The cadets marched past with the drums beating. We stood around in a big circle and saluted the flag as it fluttered in the breeze. Our hearts swelled with

pride. It was a short and simple ceremony. It was at the same time wonderfully solemn.

The school volunteers now came out with baskets of sweets. The boys were wild with joy. They helped themselves freely from the baskets. Soon the baskets were empty. They laughed and shouted and ran about. Everybody was bright and merry with hardly a care in the world.

3. It went on like this for an hour or two. Then we broke up and made for home. I could not help feeling a little thoughtful on my way back. My mind went back to the days when the country fought for her freedom. I had visions of the heroes and martyrs who died in the good cause. I remembered Gandhiji, the man of peace who brought about a bloodless revolution in the land. I remembered his thrilling message on the eve of Dandi march: "When I go marching, the whole of Hindustan will swell up from end to end like an ocean tide." I remembered Netaji, who with his cry of "Delhi Chalo", and the Azad Hind Fauz marching up behind him at the gates of Kohima. I had a vision of Bagha Jatin (Jatin the tiger) who died riddled with bullets on the banks of the Buri Balam.

4. The country is now free. But still there is a good deal to be done. The people are poor and ignorant. There is disease and suffering and want. We are industrially backward. Our defence is poor. I felt, I too must do my bit to build up the new India of the future. That is the true message of the Independence Day for us.

A Social Function in Your School

Points: 1—Our annual social features; 2—Arrangements on the day—Invitees—Guests; 3—How observed; 4—Conclusion.

1. We were in the midst of the mellow, mild days of October with its blue sky and golden light. The Pujas were just ahead. We were already in a holiday mood. We were going to have a break-up social before

the holidays started. That, in fact, was an annual feature.

2. We all look forward to this particular day. All the eight hundred boys of the school get together. Everybody feels jolly. Everybody has some part in making the social a glorious success. While big fellows of classes X and XI were fitting up the stage, three or four little ones of classes V and VI were tottering up with a flower-pot to put it down in its place. It is this fine team-spirit and good-fellowship which makes the occasion significant.

We had invited our guardians as well. So we had to make preparations on a fairly big scale. We were lucky to have the fine actor and dramatist Sri J. M. for our chief guest.

We put up a pandal for about a thousand guests. We further put up a stage, foot lights and all, for our entertainment programme. It was no small job to complete the lighting arrangement. The whole broad facade of the school was hung with festoons of tinted bulls.

3. By the evening the pandal was fairly full. When the Chief Guest drove up, our cadets, smartly turned out, gave him a guard of honour. The Headmaster escorted him to his chair under the pandal.

It appeared we had lot of young talents in all our classes. The little boys staged a folk-dance, which won much applause. The orchestra presented by a party of senior students was also very much admired. The star item, however, was the play itself—Sukumar Roy's *Abak Jalpan*. The play, as is well-known, is full of rollicking fun. The actors, however, with their fine make-ups, their natural sense of humour, lively gestures and movements did more than justice to the play. The audience rocked with laughter and merriment. The curtain came down with everybody clapping and cheering.

4. The chief guest complimented the actors and the others on the high standard they had reached. We went home feeling happy that our efforts were well-rewarded.

An Ideal School

Points : 1—Tagore's unhappy school days. 2—His ideal school. 3—The ideal school should follow his model. 4—Certain features described. 5—Conclusion.

1. When Rabindranath Tagore was a boy at school, he felt very unhappy. He found the class-room very cheerless. The teacher was a grim man. He could not get much good out of his school and in the end gave it up.

2. In later life, as is well known, Tagore founded a school after his heart. The boys had open-air classes under shady trees. They had loving teachers who live with them and shared their life. They lived a common life in their hostel. They would romp about in the open. All around them were green fields, blue sky, bird-song and the fresh breeze of the heaven.

3. Tagore's school was as near an approach to an ideal as man possibly can think of. But our schools are mostly dark and dingy with the rattle of traffic out in the street. No wonder that we see the "whinnying school-boy creeping like snail, unwillingly to school."

4. For ideal conditions, a school should be well away from the harsh, loud, dreary life of the city. It should be in the midst of green acres to its own, shady with trees. It is very necessary for the boys and girls to grow up in the midst of Nature. There can be no better training for their senses. They learn all about the seasons. They learn all about the crops. They learn all about the common people of the land. They study the heavens and can get their bearings by looking at the stars.

The teachers should be hand-picked—men of love and good-will. They should be imaginative enough to realise how a boy's mind works. They should know how to kindle his curiosity about the things to learn and do. There should be a well-stocked library with open shelves where a boy could handle books and browse in a corner at his leisure.

There should be further enough scope for aesthetic training. Music, dance, theatricals are neither trivial

nor frivolous as some people may think. They are an essential part of the culture of emotions without which a man remains a good deal short of ideal.

Another important thing is that it should provide for various recreations and games¹ like cricket, football, badminton and athletic exercises.

5. In the new India of today we should like to have more and more of such schools to come up. That will be the most important step towards nation-building.

School Sports

Points : 1—Enthusiasm for sports. 2—What is meant by school sports? 3—How sports are organised. 4—Value of sports. 5—Conclusion.

1. Enthusiasm for sports is one of the finest things in a school-boy's life. "The battle of Waterloo," said the Duke of Wellington, "was won on the playing fields of Eton." If the Eton boys did not play their cricket and football with so much gusto, they would not have grown into such fine soldiers, charging and putting to flight Napoleon's picked battalions. There is, in fact, nothing like sports to build up character and stamina.

2. School sports carry to our mind a special meaning. They are competitions in various physical feats. There are, for example, flat races in running. There are hurdle races which mean jumping over obstacles put in the way. There are again pole-vault, ball-throwing, three-legged races, long jump and high jump. These are some of the interesting events in school sports. These athletic contests are held generally once a year. The annual sports meet comes off sometime in January after the examinations are over.

3. Students are very fond of these sports. A good number of students are competitors and many are interested spectators on the sports day. Events follow according to programme amidst much excitement. At the end of the sport trophies, medals and other prizes

are handed to the winners. In schools sports like this the stress is on the individual standard of strength and skill.

4. The sports are mainly exercises and make students physically fit. They make them healthy both in body and mind. They are like a breath of fresh air to their tired body and mind. That is why sports and games are made a part of school education.

Sometimes games like football, cricket or volleyball, are played as an inter-class competition or a series of games between the school and other neighbouring schools. Here the players obey the captain and the stress is on team-work. Thus a sense of comradeship develops. Sometimes the games are won. Sometimes they are lost. But the players take the win or the loss in a good spirit. That is the essence of sportsmanship. The cheerful spirit in victory and defeat is the best lesson that the students can learn from sports.

5. All schools today encourage sports. The country is getting sports-conscious fast enough. Our National Government have started a big drive for better standards in sports. A very large number of school children are being trained up by experts under the Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (Former Health Minister) Sports Coaching Scheme. The sports are an important part of present-day education in school.

Last Day at School

Points: 1—The day recalled. 2—Memories and association. 3—Objects, friends, teachers. 4—Conclusion.

1. My eyes still get a little misty as I think back on that day when I bade farewell to the old school. Seven long years did I grow up here. It had become a place of memories. I knew every nook and corner of the place and to each of them did cling some fond memory or another. The school in fact had become part of me as I too became part of the school.

2. We were the outgoing batch. In a few months we shall appear at the Higher Secondary. We gathered that morning, probably for the last time, to fill in our forms and pay our fees. That was over. Now for a last look round.

Those tall thick round columns of the portico added a special grandeur to the school. We felt like little dwarfs when standing by their side. That black-berry tree in the north-west corner was a great draw to all the boys. There had been hardly a day that I did not climb that tree either for the berries or for fun. I cut out my initials on its thick trunk which would last for a year or more after I was gone. We had our snack together, I and my pals, under that mango tree, during the mid-day break. Sometimes we would sit down under its friendly shade for a long gossip-session.

Then there were those good old friends of mine whom I met everyday. I would see much less of them now. There was Bejoy, chubby and good-humoured, so full of jokes and funny stories; Samir, the poet, looking a little dreamy and wearing his hair a little long; Jatin, the hefty boxer whose punch was like the kick of a horse.

3. We filed to the Headmaster's room. We took the dust of his feet, bowing in our Indian style. He muttered his blessings to each one of us. We went round and met the other teachers. Sri Sen, the mathematics teacher, was the terror of our class with his stern looks and crushing snubs. He too gave us a soft glance when we bowed to him. He felt sure that 3 or 4 of us would score distinction mark in his subject. The Bengali teacher Sri Roy cracked a joke with a sly twinkle in his eyes. "You should not come back grate-crashing to this place," he said. "Do or die. We won't have you here back again." This was his way of saying that all of us would pass.

4. We tropped out of the gate and parted from each other on the road. I walked back home. After a time I felt an impulse to look backwards. Those tall columns already looked a little dim. But still how friendly and familiar did they look!

Student Life

Points: 1—Students should not be merely bookish. 2—Wide outlook required—curiosity to be developed. 3—Should not take part in active politics. 4—Ambition—idealism.

1. We have an age-old Sanskrit proverb which very definitely lays down that a student has no other duty beyond minding his studies. That was perhaps quite a fine ideal when life was quiet, simple and leisurely. It does not work in our times. If a man is merely bookish, he has little chance of survival. He must be alert, wide-awake and thoroughly practical when he comes to action.

2. There is however no doubt that what lends distinction to the student life is its spirit of intellectual quest. That does not make anybody a mere book-worm. A student will be hardly true to his mission if he just mugs up a few text-books. He is inspired by an eager thirst for knowledge for its own sake, a spirit of wide-ranging curiosity. Nothing comes amiss to him—history, politics, chemistry, archaeology, or ornithology. "To follow knowledge like sinking a star"—that is his ideal.

3. In their own interest the students should not be sucked into active politics. That will be too premature for them. Nothing however prevents them from discussing the ideas of the leaders, their programme of action, their impact on the country and the people. But they should not on any account allow themselves to be exploited by the scheming politicians.

4. Young men see vision. So far as the young men are concerned, the sky is the limit of their ambition. That is a perfectly healthy expression of life provided it is backed by will-power and does not begin and end in mere day-dreaming. Without this drive of ambition, there will hardly be any inventors, explorers, thinkers or writers from the ranks of the young students. Along with ambition they should have a love for ideals. What made Gautama Buddha give up his

kingdom? Why did Jesus Christ die on the cross? It is ideals which not only make life pure but lend it purpose and significance.

Student Community and Social Service

Points: 1—Condition of society. 2—Picture of city and countryside. 3—Programme of social service—its importance—conclusion.

1. What is wrong with the society we live in? We may very well say everything is wrong and nothing is right. The country is free today and we have all the outward forms of democracy—the ballot box, adult franchise and legislatures. But things are still very much in a mess.

2. The picture is indeed depressing. In the slums of our big cities like Bombay and Calcutta, people live huddled together like pigs in miserable hovels. There is a good deal of vice and drunkenness among these unhappy slum-dwellers. Their children go hungry and in rags. From time to time epidemics break out and take their toll. The countryside is in no way better off except in the matter of over-crowding. The stark poverty of the common people is at once evident. The standard of literacy is absurdly low. The people have hardly any elementary notion of sanitation and hygiene. These people hardly know the pleasure of two square meals a day. They have hardly any stamina. They suffer and die most helplessly.

3. The students cannot possibly remain blind to all this human misery and wretchedness at their very doorstep. They have imagination and sympathy. They have zeal and enthusiasm. They are capable of organization and hard work. They should realize as early as possible that their country cannot rise high in the scale of the nations, if the common people remain so miserably backward. For a start, they may do a little welfare work in the slums. They may run night schools

both for children and adults. They may collect clothes and toys from door to door for the unhappy children.

In their vacations they may go out in parties to the country-side living among the common people and understanding their problems at first hand. By *Sramadan* as preached by Acharya Bhawe, they may build roads, dig wells, clear the jungles, clean and repair the old scummy ponds with their banks crumbling down. Who else but our young people should rush to the rescue, when flood, famine, epidemic or earth-quake hits the land? Out of our students will come the future leaders of the country. So it is certainly up to them to know the country, the people and their problems at first hand.

Your ambition in life

Points: 1—Ambition without will-power ineffective.
2—My ambition,—an eminent teacher,—some great examples.
3—Intellectual life. 4—Urge for self-perfection—teacher as nation-builder.

There is no particular harm in being ambitious. "He that aims at the sky," runs the proverb, "shoots much higher than he who aims at a tree." That sounds like good common-sense. The only trouble is that most people have not enough force of character to do anything for realizing their ambition. Their life becomes just one long day-dream.

People usually hanker for power or glory or wealth. That is the form their ambition usually takes. I have not enough drive to take to any of those lines. I feel almost shy to come out with what I cherish in my inmost heart. I have a feeling that I may be laughed at.

2. The life of some of the noble teachers of this country and of other ones has always an irresistible appeal for me. I feel thrilled whenever I think of these dedicated souls. Prof P. C. Roy, Prof. Raman, Prof. S. N. Bose—these are names to conjure with. No less magical are some of the names among the great foreigners—Rutherford, Millikan, Einstein. These people

have reached the very peaks of achievement in their own spheres.

3. I don't know of my own possibilities. It is for others to judge what I am really worth. I however feel strongly fascinated by the life of thought, of boundless curiosity, of ceaseless quest after truth, of eager inquiry into all that is mysterious and wonderful. I feel that by nothing can man become more god-like than by this strong intellectual urge.

4. This urge is really an urge for self-perfection. That is not an unworthy ideal by itself. I have still another ideal in view while pursuing my ambition. It has nothing to do with self. A great teacher is a nation-builder. Every one of the great souls I have earlier mentioned has left his mark on generations of students. Their nobility of character, single-minded devotion to learning, love of great ideals have been like beacon-lights not only to their own country-men but to the world at large. This is the whole truth about my ambition. It is probably very much like the "desire of the moth for the star." Anyway it has powerfully gripped my imagination and I cannot get away from it.

Hostel-Life

Points: 1—Students hostels not unknown in ancient India. 2—Troubles of a new-comer. 3—Discipline of hostel-life. 4—Encourages self-help. 5—Training in civic virtue. 6—Spirit of rivalry. 7—Conclusion.

1. Students' hostels are not something new in this country. India could boast of great residential universities even in the earliest days of history. The names of such great centres of learning as Nalanda, Taxila and Bikramsila have passed into legends. Large numbers of students lived and learnt together in those grand institutions.

2. A boy coming from a quiet loving home usually find a few rude shocks waiting for him when he first comes to a hostel. All of a sudden he finds himself

thrown among a lot of healthy, high-spirited youngsters who would not let him alone. He becomes a full member of an adventurous high-spirited brotherhood.

3. The discipline of hostel-life is a wholesome corrective for a boy. He has to go by the clock in everything. Breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner are served at regular hours and he cannot keep anybody waiting for him. Hours of study as well as those of play and exercise are also strictly laid down. However easy-going a boarder might be by nature, he has to a certain extent mend his ways.

4. There are certain qualities of character, which hostel-life definitely encourages. A boarder has to look after himself. He has to make his own bed, keep his room tidy, take good care of his clothes, keep his accounts, and travel on his own. This encourages habits of self-help which he finds very useful in later life.

5. Besides, hostel-life offers a good training in certain essential civic virtues. Hostel-life is after all a community life. When a boy or youth has to live among so many others of his kind, he cannot take his own way in everything or afford to be an eccentric. He has to be polite and tolerant. He has to conform to certain decent standards.

6. There is usually a spirit of healthy rivalry, of worthy emulation in the community life of the hostel. There are scholars among boarders who raise the whole intellectual tone of the hostel. There are sportsmen and athletes keen on making and beating records. With such fine examples of the culture of both mind and body, the average boarder also feels spurred to do his best.

7. The hostels are the nurseries of the nation. In order to have a sound and healthy generation our students' hostels should be run on right lines to maintain the highest standards all round.

Outdoor Games

Points: 1—What are outdoor games. 2—Their popularity. 3—Benefits of these games. 4—Development of manly qualities, team-spirit and leadership. 5—Abuse of them and its effects—conclusion.

1. Outdoor games are those that are played in the open air. They include cricket, football, hockey, tennis, badminton, *hadudu* and similar other games. Rowing is getting popular with the Indian students. Games have been made part and parcel of school and college education. The Duke of Wellington is reported to have said that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. It may be a story only or may be a fact. But it tells us that the English people attach great importance to outdoor games.

2. Football is the most popular game in India. Cricket and tennis are next favourites. Even the fair sex is taking part in tennis and badminton games. Hockey is already a favourite game with our young men. The popularity of these games shows their great importance in our national life.

3. These games played in the open air improve our health. They have all the nice thrill of a friendly contest. Our mind is toned up. School children who are fond of these games, retain to the end of their life, a liking for exercise in the open air. So they remain physically fit in their grown-up years. These games, therefore, give us enjoyment, health and strength.

4. These games have other good effects on us. They call forth several manly virtues, such as courage, endurance, patience, presence of mind. They develop a team-spirit. All the players obey the captain and play for a common end. These games also give a very valuable training in organisation and discipline. The captain becomes the natural leader in the field. All the other players look up to him for guidance and inspiration. The captain in his turn takes the full burden of responsibility for the team. He selects the best men without fear and bias. All the players have faith in the sound judgement of the captain. Thus the captains

of games in the field ripen into leaders of men in society.

5. But too much of these games is harmful. Boys of delicate health may overstrain their physical power by playing for long hours. The unusual ambition for athletic distinction may lead to the neglect of studies. But if the games are played with moderation, they do good to both the body and the mind.

A Cricket Match

Points : 1—Introduction, popularity of the game.
2—Cricket match between Calcutta University XI and United Cricket Club of Bombay. 3—Description of the match.
4—Conclusion.

1. Cricket is regarded as the national game of Englishmen all over the world. Test Match between England and Australia is an event of the greatest importance. Cricket has also become a favourite game in India. It is played in the cold months of winter in this country.

2. On Monday, the 10th January, 1960, I went to witness the friendly cricket match between the Calcutta University XI and the United Cricket Club of Bombay. The game was played on the lovely Eden Garden Ground. Bright rays of the sun fell on the vivid green grass of the oval shaped ground. The green and the white stands were all full. The Bombay team won the toss and decided to field first. The captain had arranged the field before the University batsmen went in to bat. It was a whole day match from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. with an interval of one hour from 1 to 2 p.m. for lunch and fifteen minutes for tea at 4 p.m.

3. The opening pair came in. Bowling began from the High Court end. It was deadly bowling. The batsmen felt uncomfortable. However, there was no loss and no run. It was a *maiden* over. The second over came. The batsman was dismissed for a *duck* with the last ball of the over. The Calcutta batsmen could not match the wiles of the Bombay bowlers, Vyas and Ramchandra. All of them were out for only 109 runs.

before lunch. Only S. Mitra of the University eleven stood out courageously. He refused to be beaten with 56 runs to his credit.

After lunch the Bombay team began to bat. The batsmen played with confidence and executed fluent strokes. The University bowling was poor and fielding still worse. Bombay passed the Calcutta University total with six wickets intact. They scored 132 for 4 at close of play.

Among the batsmen two were worthy of special mention. S. Mitra of Calcutta and Noorani of Bombay played a sound game. Their *cuts* and *drives* were beautiful. Vyas deserved the highest praise for splendid bowling.

4. I had a natural partiality for the home team. I felt a bit sorry that Calcutta lost to Bombay. But I felt all the time that the better team had won. Bombay showed better combination and more nerve. Cricket is a game of nerves. If nerves are frayed, the game is lost. After the fall of the first two wickets, Calcutta played like a beaten team. All of us, however, enjoyed the game very much.

A Football Match

Points: 1—Introduction. 2—A match between East Bengal Club and Mohan Bagan Club, a big crowd of spectators. 3—Description of the match. 4—Conclusion showing the defects of Indian football games.

1. Football games are played all over India. They are particularly popular in West Bengal. A football match on the *maidan* draws the biggest crowd.

2. On the 20th September, I went to see the football match between Mohan Bagan Club and East Bengal Club in the shield tournament. The match was played on the Calcutta Ground. Both the teams are famous in Bengal. Each team has its enthusiastic supporters. A friend of mine bought a ticket for me. I went at least one hour before time. I saw a sea of human heads rolling towards the Calcutta Ground. The whole atmosphere was tense. Men were pushing and shouting

for entering the enclosure. The gallery was packed full to its highest capacity. A large number could not buy tickets and enter the ground. Some of them sat dangerously perched on near-by trees to see the game.

3. From two ends of the ground the two teams entered. The players of Mohan Bagan were in red and dark green. The East Bengal players were in red and yellow. The two captains stood near the referee. A coin was spun into the air. East Bengal lost the toss. The eleven players of Mohan Bagan took the Fort side of the ground. East Bengal took the High Court end.

At five sharp the referee blew on his whistle and the play started. It was an up and down game. Some time the ball came near the Mohan Bagan goal. In the next minute the ball passed near East Bengal goal. East Bengal took the lead in the sixth minute. Loud cheers rang from all sides. The play began again. Mohan Bagan fought bravely. East Bengal defended very stoutly. The centre-forward of Mohan Bagan dribbled past the defence and sent a clear pass to his left-wing man. The wing-man ran with the ball with lightning speed and pushed the ball neatly to the centre-forward. The latter took the ball and cleverly passed by the stopper. He crashed the ball into the net from close range. This equalizer came two minutes before half time. Again, the whole crowd broke into loud cheers.

After the change over, both sides began to play very finely. With their neat short-passing moves East Bengal frequently stormed the goal of Mohan Bagan. But luck seemed to be against the team. Mohan Bagan centre-forward scored the winning goal only one minute before the end. East Bengal finally lost by two goals to one. The supporters of Mohan Bagan were wild with joy. They shouted and danced. The crowd of spectators soon melted away.

4. The match provided an exciting game from start to finish. But certain defects attracted my notice. The teams lacked kicking power. Their shots were generally poor. Another defect was failure of nerve in front of the goal mouth. They hesitated and missed scoring chances.

A town market

Points: 1—Features of a bazar. 2—Different sections, some typical scenes. 3—Steps for improving undesirable conditions.

1. The well-known Indian word for a market is 'bazar'. It is a word, however, with definitely unpleasant associations. The din, squalor, stench and litter all together makes marketing a daily ordeal for the average citizen. If a man is well off enough to keep a servant, he may spare himself this horrid experience from day to day. But there is quite a chance the fellow will pinch the bazar money and the fish and vegetable he brings back home will be neither fresh nor tasty.

2. The city of Calcutta, like most other cities, has a number of these bazars, each serving a particular area. The lay-out of each market is more or less the same. It has a number of sections. Each section deals in a particular type of commodities. There are again a number of pucca stalls in each section where the sellers sit with their goods before them. There are narrow lanes in between the stalls for the shoppers. A section deals in fresh vegetables and greens—peas, tomatoes, cabbages, pumpkins and gourds. Another section is taken up by fruit-stalls—mangoes, bananas, jack-fruits, apples and pears. A fairly big section of stalls deals in potatoes and onions. The fish, meat and poultry sections are a little apart from the rest of the bazar. The crowd is usually thickest there, the weakness of the Bengalees for fish being almost proverbial. There are often sharp exchanges between buyers and sellers. People go on higgling furiously at the top of their voice. Tempers often get frayed. Not unoften there is a row and sometimes even a hand-to-hand scuffle ensue.

3. These unseemly scenes are, in fact, a blot on our national character. The bazar reflects some of the worst traits of our character almost glaringly. Here we find in evidence our general lack of aesthetic standards, our lazy acceptance of dirt and squalor, our indiscipline and vulgar outbursts. It will need nothing short of a national effort—in which the government, civil authorities and private individuals will all have to play a part

—to make our bazars decent and attractive places where people can buy and sell in peace and comfort.

A village market

Points: 1.—A hat described. 2.—The vendors. 3.—Commodities on sale. 4.—The community spirit in a hat.

1. A village market is called a "hat". Like the town bazar, it does not meet every day. It meets only twice a week, the market-days being spaced out by a few days in between.

The market-place is marked by a few scattered tin-and-bamboo sheds on mud platforms. They lie deserted except on the market-days. The people from six or seven neighbouring villages come flocking to the market for a few days' supplies which must be enough to last till the next market-day.

2. Even in the small hours of the morning one will find a procession of bullock-carts trundling towards the market-place from all parts of the compass. One cart is piled high with huge sacks of rice. Another with earthen-wares of all sorts—pots, vessels, dishes, pitchers and even incense-burners. Another comes laden with hand-loom goods—dhuties, saris, gamchas and mosquito-curtains. A stream of vendors also come trudging along. Some carry their wares in a big basket on their heads. Others carry their wares in baskets slung at either end of bamboo pole which they balance on either this shoulder or that.

Some of the sellers squat with their goods under the sheds. It appears they pay a small rent for them. Others spread themselves out in the open each on his usual site. If the day is hot, they rig up a canopy with a bit of rag overhead.

3. The vegetables have a very fresh look. The cabbages and cauliflowers might have been plucked from the earth only a few hours ago; they have still the dew and earth clinging to them. There are heaps and heaps of greens and vegetables all over the place—potatoes, carrots, brinjals, pumpkins, cucumbers and

what not. Here is really God's plenty. There are only a couple of fish stalls—fish being available usually in its smaller and cheaper varieties—punti, khalisa, mauralla, kai and so on—the poor villagers cannot afford to buy the choicer specimens and they are sent off to the town bazars.

4. There is a kind of free-and-easy community atmosphere in the village hat. Everybody has a hail-fellow air. There is no end of back-slapping and chest-thumping. It seems everybody knows everybody and nobody is a stranger. It is this spirit of warm friendship and fellow feeling which lends the village hat its greatest charm.

A journey by boat

Points: 1—Boat journey out of fashion. 2—A particular journey. 3—Place, occasion, etc., details of journey.

1. We are all so speed-minded now-a-days. A boat-journey hardly appeals to us. This slow, lazy transport with sails flapping and oars creaking seems altogether primitive. Perhaps we gave way to an odd fancy that day when three of us hired a country-boat at Chandpal ghat for a trip to the Botanical Gardens. Well, I shall not forget all the lovely things I saw on the way. It was a very happy idea of ours.

2. The boatmen pushed off. We were soon sailing down the river with the wind in our sails. Samir was the one among us who did not know how to swim. He seemed a little scared. In another ten minutes, the ferry-steamer caught up with us. She blew a few shrill whistles for warning and puffed along, whipping up big foamy waves in her track. Poor Samir screamed as a big wave washed in and fairly drenched him. He had to hang up his shirt on the boat-mast and it soon dried up in the strong breeze. That was a little adventure.

3. We sailed on, along the right bank. I vividly remember the very many pictures which met my eyes, one after the other. Those were dock-yards and industrial areas. But a little beyond that we could see nature has indeed given us a lovely land to live in. In

places, I found green grassy slopes coming down to the very edge of the river. A big banyan tree, thick with leaves and creepers hung low over the water at one spot. A boat lay moored under its shade. Further on was a row of temples, almost in ruins. A few sand-banks appeared here and there on the river. A few fishing-boats were out on the river. We found a good catch of *hilsas* floundering in the nets as the fishermen pulled them in from the water. Down a white foot-track came shy looking women and girls to fill their pitchers in the river. We felt we were very close to simple life of the people who live in this lovely neighbourhood.

It was time for us to cross over to the other side. The sun was already low in the sky. The broken lights glittered on the wide stretch of the waters. The tall green trees of the Botanical Gardens grew distinct. The boat touched the bank with a little bump.

A journey by train

Points: 1—Discomforts of a railway journey. 2—Occasion. 3—Scene at the railway station. 4.—Fellow passengers. 5—Journey described.

I. I like to travel as much as anybody else. It is always a treat to see new scenes and new faces too. That can be very refreshing indeed. But the very idea of a train-journey makes my heart sink. I travel third, that is all I can afford. Those who do not mind expenses, can certainly travel in comfort. The lot of the third-class passengers, however, has in no way become better in free India than it was in the British days when Gandhiji himself travelled third to share the woes of the common man.

2. Still we cannot go on staying at home all the time. Last summer, my uncle at Puri invited me to his place. He felt I needed a change as I did not stir out of Calcutta for the last one year.

3. So one May evening I headed for Howrah to catch the Puri Express. The platform was a sea of human heads. I stood blinking before a carriage door.

It looked so crammed. My coolie, however, had more dash than I. He scrambled in, dumped my things on the rack and pulled me up after him.

4. The train puffed out of the station. By that time everybody had found a seat for himself. I found myself sandwiched between a hefty bearded Sikh and a yellow-turbaned Marwari, plump and pot-bellied. In a long journey we find people from every part of India in our company. That makes us feel India is one.

5. The Express flashed past the small stations. I caught glimpses of the old familiar scenes of the Bengal country-side bathed in the moon-light—scrub-wood, mud-puddles, bamboo-clumps and occasionally a cluster of huts. Khargpur, our first halt, was a big, bustling station. Vendors were briskly racing up and down with lusty shouts. I felt quite thirsty with the heat and the crowd and bought a glass of iced lemonade.

By the morning we passed Cuttack. We had a wonderful view of the Chilka. The wide stretch of waters sparkled in the sun. Already a number of fishing-boats were out for the morning catch. At this point, a few *pandas* struggled into our compartment. They were looking for their clients. Some of them had even heated arguments with each other. I only hoped it would not end in blows.

I did not feel dull watching all those people around me. The scenery of Orissa also was attractive—the red rocky soil, sometimes a flashing stream, and the blue hills in the distance. At last the train slowed down. In a few minutes I reached Puri.

A moonlit night

Points: 1—The setting described. 2—The moon rises. 3—Change in landscape, details. 4—Experience cannot be described in rational terms.

1. I can still call up that particular night of all nights with its wonderful magic though it happened more than a year back. I am no poet, nor I have the makings of one. Yet for once I felt dimly what the

poets feel when they write so movingly about moon and stars and clouds. There is something deep down in human nature which responds eagerly to the grand simple things of nature. On that moonlit night by the Dhakuria Lakes, I felt for a few hours lost to the world and living in a world all my own. I was fairly moon-struck.

2. I had been to the lakes for a breath of fresh air. The grass was green and soft on the bank. I lay down on my back. The evening glow faded off and the shadows thickened. I stayed on even after most people had left. The moon slipped out from behind some light fleecy clouds. It was a splendid full moon. I had no idea that the moon could bring about such a magical change in land and sky and water. It was late autumn. There was thin mist around and the grass and leaves were slightly damp with dew. But everything looked so soft, delicate and silvery. The blue sky was lit up from end to end. The stars looked a little dim. A few white clouds hovered lazily across the sky; they too glimmered softly in the moonlight.

3. The whole landscape seemed silvered. The palm groves looked drooping and drowsy with their tops shining white in the moonlight. At the bottom they cast deep pools of shadow. The same chequered pattern of light and shadow could be seen everywhere around a bush or hedge or clump of trees. The waters rippled under a brisk breeze which started blowing and set the leaves whispering. Every little ripple caught a gleam of the moonlight and the whole surface of the lake flashed and sparkled with an unearthly splendour all its own. From afar came floating down the breeze snatches of a song. Evidently the singer sang out of the fulness of his heart on such a glorious night.

4. I felt suddenly that it was getting late. My hair was wet with dew. I turned homewards. The glare of the street-lamps broke up the magic spell. I wandered what was there after all in the moon to make us feel so dreamy and foolish. She is a dead planet, full of hollows and deserts and terribly cold. When the poet addresses her as "Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,"

it makes no sense to us. Still she can be enchanting enough in our less rational moods.

A Sunset scene

Points: 1—Beauty of a sunset. 2—Place mentioned
3—Sunset described. 4—Some other details.

1. The sunset has a poetry of its own. It is a daily wonder in our lives. But those who are doomed to city life have hardly the eyes to see how glorious it is. They are so feverishly busy "getting and spending" that they get little time for such idle fancies. Nor do they get much of a chance. The dust, smoke and soot of the city very effectively shuts out from view all that is fresh and beautiful in nature.

2. Last X'mas I happened to be in a Hooghly village. All around were the wide open spaces. I would ramble about at large. It was on one such occasion that I saw a sunset of usual splendour. While going along the dusty white road, I stopped for a while to watch the village-boys playing a game of *hadudu*.

3. All of a sudden, I became aware of a soft red glow spreading all over the landscape. The sun was setting in the west. But what a magical change did the sun bring about everywhere in that last red flicker! Tree-tops, shrubs, blades of grass and the very faces of boys at play seemed aglow with the very flame of life. The sky in the west was a perfect riot of colours. The sun was a glowing crimson ball of fire. Streaks of flaming gold, orange and scarlet stretched from either side of this glowing disc to the far ends of the sky. Masses of clouds, purple and gold and amber added to the magic of the sky. They looked all the more gorgeous against the background of blue and white. Their shapes were many and various.

4. Slowly the glow faded. The shadows became thicker. It was the hour of home-coming. The rooks and pigeons and hosts of bats were returning to their nests and the air was full of the flutter of wings. Herds of cows lazily trailed across the green fields and the white foot-tracks, kicking up behind them a haze of dust.

The temple-bells kept chiming in the distance. Lights sprang up in the humble huts in far-off villages. Glow-worms shone in the thick little bushes. Away in the west a lone bright star came up. That was a signal for me to get up and go home.

An evening walk by the river-side

Points: 1—Place mentioned. 2—Good effects of the walk. 3—Particular walk described in detail—details about men, things and nature. 4—Return home.

1. Last summer I was staying with my cousin at Chandernagar for a change. It was a small sleepy town, just the sort of place for a rest-cure. The Ganges lazily winds past the town.

2. I liked nothing so much as my evening constitutional on the river-bank. I gained in appetite. I slept better. I put on weight. I quite got rid of that tired, listless feeling which I felt coming over me in the noisy crowded life of the city. I would recommend to every jaded city-dweller a brisk trot every evening by the river-side, filling his lungs with as much ozone as they would hold.

3. That was a Sunday evening. A holiday crowd had already gathered by the time I reached the river-bank. I saw some familiar faces. They were my fellow walkers whom I met every evening. Some old pensioners, looking jolly and carefree, sat chatting on a river-side bench. They would take a gentle stroll of a few hundred yards. That is all they needed to keep themselves fit. There were youngsters too, swaggering along as if the world belonged to them, and talking excitedly about films and football. The little children in pink or green or blue or yellow looked like so many gay fluttering butterflies as they played about all over the green bank and slopes.

The sun almost touched the sky-line on the other bank. In the soft red glow, I saw the green corn-fields stretching away on the other side. A few quiet hamlets lay dotted about among them.

The river too looked aflame. The broken lights

played on the ripples making them flash and sparkle. A few fishing-boats, with their white sails flapping in the breeze, were hauling in their last catch. A ferry-boat, a little way down the river, was taking back its last load of passengers from the town-end to the village.

4. The crowd was thinning away. The street-lights could be seen through the gathering darkness. A cool breeze sprang up, blowing in gusts. I felt fresh, brisk and happy. I would not miss my walk so long as I was staying in this lovely river-side town.

The City or Town you live in

Points: 1—Calcutta, its diversity. 2—Old times and new. 3—Various areas described. 4—Cosmopolitan character. 5—Its supreme distinction.

1. I live in Calcutta—usually described as a “city of palaces”. Palaces no doubt there are and plenty of them. But if we care to know the city as well as we should, we have to walk about a good deal among its back-streets and dingy, crooked lanes and by-lanes. In fact, there are quite a few Calcuttas inside Calcutta, each different from the other. It is such a big sprawling city that we will take days and even months to see enough of it.

2. It is wonderful to think that this city with its blazing lights, broad asphalt roads, luxury hotels and huge departmental stores was nothing but marsh and jungle a few centuries back when Job Charnock founded it. There are still remote suburbs of Calcutta beyond Tollygunge and Narikeldanga which recall how Calcutta looked in Charnock’s days. Even now parts of the city actually turn into swamps after a burst of monsoon.

3. If we go around Chowringhee and Dalhousie Square we may well be taken aback. The offices are humming with business. The shop windows look so tempting. The car-parks are overflowing. The cinema-houses and restaurants are bursting with pleasure-seekers who have money enough to throw about.

We may go to exploring southwards to areas like New Alipore or Ballygunge. The streets are nice and

clean. Houses are well-designed and even fashionable with balconies and porticos. These are typical upper middle-class areas with an air of well-being and prosperity.

We may, for a change, go down a few lanes in Shyambazar or Bagbazar taking a good look round. Houses are damp, dark and poky. We may see worse horrors if we visit a few slums which Pandit Nehru wants to burn down.

4. We will probably see people of all parts of India in Calcutta. In fact, parts of the city have developed an outlandish look. In Chittaranjan Avenue, the very houses are in the Jaipuri style of architecture and the Marwaris, Gujratis and Sindhis have set up a big colony for themselves. In south Calcutta we find lots of people talking Tamil or Malayalam. There is even a China town in Calcutta around Bentinck Street.

5. The greatest distinction of Calcutta, however, is its intellectual life. Besides the universities, colleges and schools, it has everything that keeps people mentally fresh and vigorous—museum, library, art exhibitions, debating clubs, seminars, cinema and theatre. That is Calcutta—lively, picturesque and many-sided.

Any religious festival you have witnessed

Points: 1—Saraswati Puja, Goddess described. 2—Season of worship. 3—Worship. 4—Usual cultural and other activities on the occasion.

1. Of all the festivals in the Hindu Calender, the Saraswati Puja has the biggest thrill for the young. Saraswati is the Goddess of Learning. From the hundreds of images that are worshipped every year, we are all familiar with her appearance. Wonderfully fair and graceful, she sits on a lotus with her feet resting lightly on a swan, and plays on her *Vina* or lyre.

2. The day of worship falls every year on the Sripanchami Day. This is the fifth day of the full moon in the month of Magh (January-February). Winter is almost drawing to an end by that time. There is hardly any bite in the air. The gentle winds are laden

with the scent of mango blossoms. The sky is bright blue. The days are glorious with light. Spring is just round the corner. It is quite in the fitness of things that the Goddess of Learning should be worshipped at this time of the year when nature is so fresh and beautiful.

3. The young worshippers will be soon facing their examinations. That makes them more zealous in their worship. They pile up their books around the goddess for her blessing. A few wily chaps try to flatter the goddess by throwing handfuls of flowers at her and saying the prayers with an extra fervour. They have been scamping their studies. With a little support from the goddess they guess, they may even pass first division. There is an oft-quoted story about Kalidasa, the great poet. He was such a blockhead that he would hack at the very branch on which he was sitting. Thus everybody laughed at him. In sheer disgust, he was about to drown himself. The goddess appeared before him at that moment. With her boon, he became the finest scholar of his age and a poet as well.

4. The *Puja* is a gala day for the students of all ages. Saraswati is a bountiful goddess. She confers on her worshippers not only knowledge but grace and strength and beauty. In every school and college in Bengal, the students on this occasion, come out with the finest programme they are capable of. They even make hectic preparations for a month to make the day a success. There is even a spirit of rivalry, by no means unhealthy, among the various institutions. As we wander into a institution, we see what goes on there. The boys have rigged up a stage of their own. They will play Tagore's *Chandalika* before the footlights. That is not all. There is no lack of youthful talents. We shall see a *Manipuri dance*. This is followed by an orchestra. Next a *raga sangit*. Next a *solo* song. So on and so forth.

Saraswati is the patron goddess of all young learners. It is they who feel most gloriously happy on this particular day.

Any place of interest visited by you

Points: 1—Introduction. 2—Occasion of the journey.
3—Ajanta, its wall paintings. 4—Ellora its huge rock-temples.
5—Conclusion.

1. I have a passion for travelling. India however is not the kind of country where travelling is a pleasure. First, journeys are very expensive. Next, trains are so over-crowded that we can hardly stir a limb and if it is a long journey, we get down at the other end more dead than alive.

2. I had thus a real thrill when our scout-master Sree B. Sen asked me whether I would care to join a school party going to *Ajanta* and *Ellora*—the marvellous rock temples, the most wonderful examples of the art of our ancients, about which we have all heard and read so much. The railways would charge us concession fares and that would make the journey fairly cheap. It was the nicest way of spending the Puja holidays.

3. *Ajanta* actually lies in a pass in the Vindhya. It is a small village. The marvellous wall paintings which everybody talks about now remained lost to the world for long centuries. It was just an accident which made us aware of them. Early in the 19th century a party of British soldiers came upon a whole row of rock-cut houses in the thickest jungle.

We stood lost in wonder before those wonderful pictures on the wall. The paint looked so fresh and vivid that we could hardly believe that what we looked on was done a few centuries ago. It brought before our eyes a lost age of civilization. The caves were actually meant as the dwelling place of Buddhist monks. We saw the picture of a young king, sitting on his throne with an air of great majesty. A number of handmaidens were adorning a lovely young princess. A magnificent procession of horses and elephants was passing along the highway.

4. Next day we moved on to *Ellora*. This also is a small village. The most striking fact about these rock temples is that they represent all the three great religions of India—Buddhism, Brahmanism and Jainism. So huge were these temples, that they seemed to be hardly

the work of human hands. We wandered dreamily through the vast prayer-halls where once the holy monks sat down in rows. We next came upon a huge statue of Lord Buddha. At this point began the row of Hindu temples. Here was Siva in the midst of his dance of life and death and Durga slaying the monster. We passed to the final group of the Jaina temples at the northern end. They were fairly crowded with images dealing with the life and mission of Mahavira, founder of the religion.

5. We had travelled backwards in time. A rich pageant of history had unrolled before our eyes. Soon, however, we returned to our drab everyday life.

A visit to a country fair

Points: 1—General observations. 2—Connected with religious occasions. 3—Place mentioned. 4—Fair described.

1. Our country fairs go back to far-off times. They have a definite place in the life of the country-side. On an occasion like this, the whole country-side springs to life. Our villages are mostly sleepy hollows. The people do not have much fun or excitement. They see the same faces from day to day and follow the same dull old round. A fair means a most welcome break in their drab routine. They feel for once that the world is much bigger than their village. Besides, the village artisans find a very good market in such fairs. Blacksmiths, potters, toy-makers and weavers—all of them look forward to very brisk business when a fair is on.

2. A fair usually marks a sacred occasion. Thus we have fairs on the occasion of *Chaitra* or *Paus Sankranti*, New Year Day and *Rathajatra*. Religion in India deeply colours the life of the people and nowhere has religion a stronger hold than on our simple, quiet, easy-going villagers. Even their fun and diversion is in some way linked with religion. It is in the very air of the country.

3. Last winter I was holidaying at Hatimpur, a cosy little village in Howrah. I had a long-standing invitation from my sister and so here I was. I felt

tempted to visit the *Paus mela* (our native name for fair). The mela grounds were a couple of miles away from our village. My little nephews and nieces were greatly excited. So was every child in the village. It was, in fact, a children's day. They would get the best fun out of it.

4. So off I went to the mela with the children. From afar we saw the merry-go-round. It was a big thrill to whirl round and round till we get dizzy. There was a most tempting array of wooden toys and clay dolls. My nephew Haru would give me no peace till I bought a big rocking-horse for him. The housewives crowded round the stalls dealing in brassware or ironware—pots, pans, pitchers or various items of kitchen utensils. Hand-loom stalls were also heavily patronized. A magician ran a little booth and he let in ten people at a time, charging four annas per head. A showman advertised several startling items on a blackboard before his booths including a two-headed calf and a talking goat. He was collecting a lot of gate-money. Both children and grown-ups found their mouths watering when they stood before the food-stalls—*rasgollas*, *jilabis*, *singaras*, *begunis*—who can resist such delicacies!

It was a most hectic day. Everybody returned home late in the evening tired but happy. The next day life was as quiet as ever.

An Industrial Exhibition

Points : 1—An exhibition, its character. 2—Pavilions and stalls. 3—Its effects.

1. A few years ago I happened to visit an industrial exhibition. The sponsors of the exhibition were obviously inspired by a certain bold vision. They did not want to make it just a big *tamasha* or a nine days' wonder. Nor did they want to make it a big mart where people from all parts gathered to buy and sell. They, first and foremost, tried to bring home to the common man how his country was making giant strides in progress—in science, technology, industries, arts and

crafts. The exhibition remained open for about three months. It drew endless streams of visitors every day. They had to pay only four annas for getting a ticket.

2. The visitor had to go round a number of pavilions, each specializing in a particular line. What could be seen in Science Pavilion? There were exhibits of plants and machineries, numerous tools and instruments, big and small, manufactured by Indians. The designs for a modern salt factory, a coal distillation and a caustic soda manufacture plant were on show. There were the big lay-out plans for the Damodar Valley Project and Moor Project for irrigation and generation of powers for supply of cheap electricity in rural areas to develop industry.

The War Pavilion was perhaps the most thrilling. The peace-loving Indians were not used to these terrible instruments of death and destruction. But still India had to guard her hard-won freedom. Those sten-guns, bren-guns, anti-aircraft guns and radars impressed on everybody that India was taking very good care of her defence.

The health and sanitation pavilion was a big draw. Models of ideal village and city were on view. Picture-posters described in vivid detail the dangers of cholera, typhoid and tuberculosis—the dread diseases which carry off thousands every year. People were urged to wage a relentless battle against these public enemies.

In every pavilion there were smart young guides. They showed the visitors round. They also offered a vivid running commentary on the exhibits as people moved from one stall to the other. The centre of the exhibition was taken up by stalls displaying textile goods, leather products, glasswares, porcelain and glazed potteries, rope works, metal products and silk and khadi goods. The other stalls for arts, crafts and industries stood around this centre.

3. The exhibition deeply stirred the imagination of the people. They could not but feel that India was marching ahead. They also felt that every Indian must do his little bit in building up a great and glorious future for his country.

Seasons in India

Points: 1—India, her diversity, seasons not uniform. 2—General pattern. 3—Seasons described. 4—Seasons and festivals.

1. Probably the most wonderful thing about India is her size. She is a big country. She is nowhere the same. The traveller in India cannot but be struck with her astonishing variety. The Malabari has, to all appearances, so little in common with the Kashmiri and the Kashmiri again so little with the Bengalee. Seasons in India are also hardly the same everywhere.

2. Still the cycle of Indian seasons follows a certain broad pattern. The Indian calendar breaks up the cycle into six well-marked divisions. These are summer, rains, early autumn (called *Sarat*), late autumn (called *Hemanta*), winter and spring.

3. Summer is the most uncomfortable of seasons. In the hot plains, people gasp and faint in the heat. The earth cracks up. Nights are sometimes so stuffy, that people have to bring out their cots and sleep under the open sky. They sigh with relief when the blue monsoon clouds heap up on the sky and the rains break. This is a fairly critical season. If there is too much rain, there will be floods bringing untold misery on the people. If again there is too little, the crops will fail. This may actually lead to a country-wide famine with all its horrors.

Autumn, both early and late, is a very fine season. In *Sarat*, the weather clears up, the sky is blue. Only a few light white clouds lazily float about. The fields look gay and bright with gold-green crops. *Hemanta* is the harvesting season. Sheaves of golden crop are cut down and stored in granaries. The peasants all over the country feel at their happiest in this season.

Winter is rather hard on the poor. In India many people do not have even a roof over their heads and they go about in rags. They sit around blazing logs and fight the cold as best they can. As a rule, this is the healthiest season. Food-stuffs become a good deal cheaper and the market-stalls make a display of the freshest cabbages, peas, tomatoes and what not. The

scent of mango-blossoms in the air is a signal, that the Spring is just round the corner. It is the loveliest of seasons, gay with buds and blossoms. The air is loud with bird-song.

4. Our festivals are a good deal bound up with the seasons. Durga Puja or Dussera in Autumn, *Holi* in Spring, *Rathajatra* in the rains are some of the well-known instances. In the old days man was very much in tune with nature and heralded each season with a festival. But this merry spirit is fading away and life is getting more and more drab.

Your favourite book

Points: 1—The book, title and author. 2—General characteristics. 3—Significance of the title. 4—The story. 5—Some important characters.

1. Tarasankar's "*Kalindi*" is easily one of the great novels of our times. Those who have not the patience to read through a long novel, at least knows the story in its film version. That too was a great box-office hit.

2. It is a story of wonderful sweep and power. Apparently it is all about the fortunes of two rival zeminder families—the Roys and Chakrabarties who are linked by marriage ties. But the story widens out into the life of the common people—their weal and woe, the fun and merriment of village life along with its doom and disaster. Through it all we occasionally hear the rumblings of social upheaval and the battle for freedom.

3. The river Kalindi which flows past the village lends its name most aptly to the story. It is a river of woes. The *char* lands which it throws up are fought over by rival factions. Heads are broken, blood is spilt and corpses are tossed into its dark waters. The river becomes almost a character in the story and plays its own gripping role.

4. The story is briefly told. Rameswar and Indra are the heads of two rival zeminder families. There was an attempt once to end the family feud by marriage.

Rameswar was married to Radharani—Indra's sister. He however became suspicious of his wife and murdered her wiping out all traces of the crime. When he returned from his wanderings he brought home a second wife Suniti, a woman of great refinement and culture. She bore two sons. Mohin, the elder, was headstrong and strong-willed. Ahin, the younger, took after his mother and was intellectual, graceful and refined. The old feud was once again renewed. A village bully says insulting words about Mohin's step-mother Radharani. He shoots him dead and gets a life sentence. This tragedy brings the two families together once again. Indra persuades Rameswar to give his son Ahin in marriage to Uma his daughter. Rameswar meanwhile has been living a strange life, shut up in his own room. Through guilt complex he begins to fancy himself a leper. Ahin and Uma are ideally happy. But love's young dream is shattered all too soon. Ahin is mixed up in some underground organisation. He is taken away by the police. This has a startling effect on Rameswar. He feels that his sons has atoned for his sins and he is at last free from his dread disease. This is the whole story.

5. The characters are remarkably vivid and life-like. Rameswar as he is shown in his early youth, is witty, well-read in classics, sensual, suspicious and mad with jealousy. Indra is the typical feudal despot, whose word is law. Suniti—a patient devoted Hindu wife. Ahin—an imaginative youngman with a passion for ideals. The rugged landscape of Birbhum and the dark rolling waters of the Kalindi provide a grim backdrop against which the tragic story unfolds itself.

Your favourite hero in history

Points : 1—Garibaldi, Italian patriot, hero-worship.
2—The then Italy. 3—Life and adventures.

1. I think there is nothing very wrong in choosing a foreigner for my hero. He is Gieseppe Garibaldi, a fisherman's son who rose to one of the greatest leaders of men and an intrepid fighter in the

cause of freedom. People are perhaps already forgetting that in the early days of the Indian struggle for freedom, our leaders held up Garibaldi before the youth of the country as the noblest of heroes and patriots. Our speakers talked about his stirring life. Our authors wrote books about him. He fired the imagination of the Indian youth.

2. Italy was a very unhappy country when Garibaldi was born. She was divided up by foreign powers and the Austrians ruled over most part of the land. The Austrian Emperor haughtily told the Italian people suffering under his rule, "You belong to me by conquest, and you are to forget that you are Italians."

3. It is against this brutal tyranny that Garibaldi fought and fought till he put an end to it once for all. His life reads like a romance. The English historian Trevelyan's books about his wonderful adventures make every school-boy love and admire his memory. He looked a most picturesque figure in his striking dress—red shirt, grey trousers, a silk handkerchief knotted round his neck and his grey cloak over his shoulders. That is how his statue on horse-back appears today as it stands on a hill looking down on Rome.

Everybody has heard of Garibaldi and his Redshirts. They were his devoted followers, a thousand in number who were always at his back.

His first revolt was smashed and he ran away to South America with a sentence of death hanging over him. On that foreign soil he took part in the civil wars that were raging in Brazil and Uruguay. He was always fighting for one good cause or another. While he was riding through a forest, chased by his enemies, his dearly loved wife Anita fell ill and died in his arms. Fourteen years later, he returned home and struck another blow for freedom. This too failed and he once again ran away to New York.

But he was not the man to tire on fighting. Once again he came back, raised forces and seized the island of Sicily. This was in 1860. He now had money, arms and plenty of fighting men under him. He next marched on Naples. The Italians looked upon him as their deliverer and hailed him wherever he went.

Garibaldi thought that Victor Emanuel, King of Piedmont, was the fittest man to be the King of the United Italy. He himself was a self-less patriot and he handed over his conquests to the man of his choice. He then retired to his island home of Caprera and lived as the darling hero of the new Italian nation. We found in him the finest proof of man's unconquerable mind. He died in 1882.

The Radio

Points : 1—Radio no longer a novelty. 2—Early history. 3—How is a broadcast made, studio, transmitting station. 4—Its place in our life.

1. We no longer find the radio as big a marvel as our grandfathers did. We have got so used to it. We may have still to wait for a few more years for TV (television) at home. But there is hardly a home now, at least in towns, without its wireless set. Even in remote villages we find people owning battery-sets. Some school boys even have a hobby of making sets by buying their components from the market.

2. But, in spite of being so common and familiar, it remains one of the great wonders of invention. The Indian scientist Jagadish Bose first hit upon the idea of sending wireless messages. But the Italian scientist Marconi was quicker with his invention. He startled the world when he announced in 1901 that he had heard messages in Newfoundland from Cornwall. Soon however everybody felt convinced he was not bluffing.

3. As we keep turning the knobs of our sets we hear such familiar announcements, "This is All India Radio or B. B. C. or Radio Ceylon." How do all these broadcasting centres work? It is really wonderful and a good deal complicated. It all begins at the studio end. Here come singers, musicians, actors and sometimes very famous and brilliant people to give talks and take part in seminars. They speak into the mike which makes an electrical record of the programme. At this stage the transmitting station takes over. It is quite separate from the studio end and is probably many miles away from it. It puts the programme on the air and

the listeners pick it up on their wireless sets. As a rule each station has its own wave-length so that one does not spoil the programme broadcast by another. How do we listen to a cricket commentary on the Test Match at Eden Gardens? The mike and other things are put down on the spot at the time. The commentator speaks into the mike which is linked to the nearest studio by telephone.

4. The radio has become very much a part of our life. Sometimes it may become a nuisance. Our neighbour may keep his set blaring late into the night and rob us all of our sleep.

We have to be thankful to the radio for many of the blessings of modern life. It brings us the latest news from all parts of the world. It provides us very good entertainment—songs, music, recitation, plays—and we get all this spending a few naya paisa. It offers us language courses, lessons in Hindi, cooking recipes, and what not. We can listen to statesmen, philosophers, writers. In a word the radio brings the world to our very armchair when we sit and turn the knob.

The Cinema

Points: 1—Place of films in our life. 2—Developments. 3—How made. 4—Studios. 5—Types of films.

1. Life would hardly have been so gay and bright for us without the cinema. It is undoubtedly the most popular form of entertainment in our times. Cinema-houses are springing up even in our mofussil towns. Everywhere they draw eager crowds, lining up in long winding queues before the ticket-window long ahead of the show. Every child shrieks with delight when he sees the *Micky Mouse* or Donald Duck doing funny things on the screen. The teen-ager is all agog when he sits watching a *Tarjan* or a Western film, packed with thrills from start to finish. Everybody gushes about such brilliant star-actors, dead and living as Douglas Fairbank, Frederic March, Ronald Colman, Charlie Chaplin, Joan Crawford and our Indian Rajkapur.

2. The first "movies" were seen early in this century. In those days they were silent and jerky. Now we have talking films, called "talkies". The technicolour films which we now see are very close to life. The most up-to-date development are the stereoscopic films. The ordinary films are two-dimensional like a picture in a book. These films are three-dimensional in which a man or lamp post or a building looks as solid as it is in fact. This makes the illusion of life complete.

3. In the old days, films were made in natural surroundings. If the producer needed a hill or an old castle for his film, he had to take his camera to the spot. Today however films are made under the roof of studios. A studio is built very high so that it may contain any kind of scenery, however big it is. It is also sound-proof so that outside noise may not spoil the film.

4. We can see some very wonderful things inside the studio. The camera is so heavy that it has to be moved about by a special machine called the "camera crane". The pieces of scenery, known as film sets have to be lighted by very powerful electric lamps. A microphone picks up the actors' voices and passes them on to a recording instrument. This instrument lays down the sound-track along the edge of a film. That is how a film talks.

5. Films have branched out into many different types. Mostly people see them for entertainment. It gives a story in pictures—say a story like *David Copperfield* or the *Prisoner of Zenda* or the *Kabuliwalla* or *Pather Panchali*. We are probably more thrilled by the film than by the book because of its more direct impact. But there are types too. A news-reel makes us see, for example, the Olympic Games or Sree Krishna Menon addressing the U. N. O. A travelogue gives us a glimpse of the country like Switzerland or Alaska which we have never visited. A documentary serves facts in a way to catch the interest of the people. It may be Tagore's life or Durgapur Steel Plant or the Bhakra Nangal Project. Educational films for schools, hospitals and factories serve the purpose of text-books. A cartoon or a puppet film is as good as a fairy story for the children.

A Street accident

Points : 1—A shocking affair. 2—Time and place. 3—Incident described. 4—What followed.

1. I occasionally see reports of street accidents in the papers as everybody else does. I had, however, no idea that it was really such a ghastly affair. It all happened before my eyes when I or all the people around least expected it. The whole bloody and gruesome incident remains stamped on my memory. Indeed I have not been sleeping well since I saw it happened before my eyes a fortnight back. The members in my family find me muttering and groaning in my sleep. Sometimes I actually get nightmares and wake up in a cold sweat.

2. I went out that Saturday afternoon for some shopping around Jagu Babu's Bazar. That is usually a very busy and crowded area. The Bazar faces Asutosh Mukherjee Road running north and south, one of the busiest thoroughfares in the city. I stood before a fruit-shop eyeing the tempting rows of bananas and mangoes. I was about to start higgling with the shop-keeper who has a way of over-charging us every time.

3. It all happened in a moment. A deafening crash which made everybody jump out of his skin. With a violent start, I turned right round. What met my eyes beats the wildest nightmare. A huge double-decker by some queer trick of fate stood actually sandwiched between two tram-cars from opposite ends. All around was a bloody shambles. The down car had its front all smashed up. The bus had hardly any trace of its radiator or wind-screen left. The up car somehow did not suffer much damage. The driver jammed on the brakes just in time and saved his car from the smash. A few bodies, terribly bruised and smashed were lying about on the track. Apparently they were no more than corpses. But quite a large number of passengers must have been badly hurt. Some would probably be maimed for life.

4. Already there was a traffic jam. An excited crowd started milling round the spot. The rougher elements as usual, began to yell, holding up their

bunched fists in the air. In their blood-thirsty manner they tried to catch hold of the conductors and drivers (if alive) and tear them limb from limb. Luckily the police meanwhile threw a cordon round the spot. The ambulance cars also arrived in half an hour. The casualties were at once hurried to the nearest hospitals. The break-down gangs also came up and removed all that was left to the bus and the tram. Once again the traffic started flowing and except for a few patches of clotted blood there was no sign of the accident left anywhere. I gathered that the bus swerved to save a stray cow loitering on public thoroughfare. Fantastic! Something which can only happen in the city of Calcutta.

The foreign country you like to visit most and why

Points: 1—England, I like most. 2—Why not other countries. 3—Our ties with England. Familiarity through books. 4—Interesting places in England.

1. How I wish I had a magic carpet of my own! I have only to say the word. In less than a moment, it will whisk me across lands and seas and put me down right in the midst of Trafalgar Square—the very heart of London. Yes, England is the country I have dreamt about most and where I most long to be.

2. Some will ask me, "Why not go to U. S. A. and see for yourself the sky-scrapers, the Statue of Liberty, the Niagras and the Grand Canyon?" Others will suggest Norway with her marvellous Midnight Sun and picturesque fiords. Still others will recommend a restful holiday in Japan with cherry-trees and chrysanthemums in bloom. But given my choice, I would choose England rather than any other country.

3. True, the English ruled us for about 200 years. They were often arrogant and brutal and their long rule has left many bitter memories. Still it is through the great literature of England that we learnt all about freedom and free institutions. We read "it is impossible to argue a nation into slavery in English language." The same literature—poetry, plays, novels, essays—

have made us familiar with everything English. England is hardly a foreign country to us. To many of us it is indeed a spiritual home.

The very birds of England seem so familiar to us—robin, redbreast, swallow, lark and magpie. No less familiar are the English flowers—daisies, daffodils, hawthorns and sweet forget-me-nots. With winter comes the sleet and snow and fog and the whole landscape looks bare and white.

4. In London I feel I shall never get lost. I know so many of its well-known landmarks. That is Hyde Park, sure enough. Those are, of course, the Houses of the Parliament. That again is the Tower. The very street-names have such a familiar sound. I seemed to have walked over them dozens of times—Oxford Street, Park Lane, Gower Street, Harley Street and so many others.

Off I must go to the Shakespeare country—Stratford on Avon. Shakespeare's own house is now a museum. The Lake District is also a place where I cannot help going. Wordsworth has made it so vivid and familiar to us. The lakes reflect the hills and woods on their clear rippling surface. The mountain slopes are covered with green forests. A sweet scent of honey suckle hangs in the air. It is all so sweet and familiar—very much like a beautiful dream which we remember when at least we wake up.

The Profession you would like to choose

Points: 1—Gandhiji's reference to himself as a farmer. 2—An Inspiring example. 3—Defects of Indian agriculture. 4—Equipment need for the profession. 5—My hopes and ideas.

1. When Mahatma Gandhi was tried by a British judge in the day of the freedom movement he was asked, "What is your profession?" Without the least hesitation he replied, "I am a peasant and farmer by profession." Some time ago while reading the great leader's life, I could not help pausing over these marvellous words. They opened up a new vista before me.

2. What indeed can be more desirable than to turn a peasant and farmer? That is the one thing

which can bring me closest to the broad masses of India. That was in fact what Gandhiji meant. His passion of the loin-cloth, the charka, the six-anna meal was really due to his great love for the common man. India lives in her villages and for many years to come, India will be as rich or as poor as the common peasant on her soil. India's economy is a peasant economy.

3. Everybody knows the unhappy story of Indian agriculture. It has been described as a gamble in monsoons. The peasant is poor and ignorant. His tools are primitive. His indebtedness is almost chronic. He has little foresight. He spends all his savings in a fit of extravagance whenever there is a marriage or some ceremony in the family.

4. I think I should do my little bit, if nobody else comes forward, to better the lot of this poor oppressed section of humanity. I can, however, do very little good to my cause, unless I am myself fully well-equipped. I know what I am going to do. I must thoroughly master the latest technical knowledge about farm machinery and farm production. I have to know everything about tractors, bull-dozers, seed-drills, harvesting, husking and winnowing machines. I have further to know all about fertilizers, rotation of crops, cattle pests and the rest of it. I can only acquire this kind of expert knowledge by taking a course in Agriculture Engineering. Our agricultural graduates mostly go out job-hunting and the country does not gain in the least through their efforts.

5. I hope, however, to turn a farmer and do farming on a big scale. By chance I may succeed or fail. Still my heart is very set on this profession of my choice. I am going to make it a mission of my life. I may not be prosperous or rolling in money. But I hope to be happy and contented. I shall feel identified with the weal and woe of the common peasants of my country. I shall watch with a thrill the dark monsoon clouds gathering in the sky. What can be more wonderful than the fields of green and gold smiling in the sun. If nothing else is mine, nobody can take away from me the simple joy of living.

Pleasures of the country

Points: 1—Town people critical towards country. 2—Countryman's joy of living. 3—Contrast with city pleasures. 4—Country pleasures described, few and simple. 5—Conclusion.

1. We all make fun of our country cousins. How queer they are! They lose their way in the streets. They stand gaping before the shop-windows. They get their pocket picked. They don't know how to step on or off a tram or bus. They have hardly any ideas about dress and toilette and about their drawing-room manners, the less said the better.

But we hardly suspect that out in the country, they get more fun out of life than we can ever hope to, in spite of our cinemas, theatres and cafe's.

2. The countrymen feel the sheer joy of living in every nerve and fibre. It is not for nothing that they have that fresh faces and that springy steps. They live close to nature among bird-song, green meadows and the scent of the new-mown hay. They are in fact quite poets though they do not write poetry. That, however, is not altogether true. We have all heard of folk-songs and folk-poetry—baul songs, bhatialis, panchalis and shyama-sangits—these are all the work of village poets who remain nameless but whose songs are sung all over the country-side.

3. The countrymen do not indeed, know the pleasures of table, as we think of them. They have not even heard of such choice delicacies as tandoori chicken, biriani or prawn cutlet which makes the mouth of every city-glutton water. But they do not necessarily feel deprived. The village men in their rambles eat their fill of juiciest berries and mangoes. They get freshest and greenest peas and cabbages and all the other things of the field for their families. They milk their own cows and quaff a whole tumbler of fresh, foamy milk. Thus they grow up big, sturdy and bold.

4. The pleasures which the countrymen know are few and simple. When the village stream is in spate during the monsoon showers, the sturdy villagers swim across the water from one bank to the other several

times. Sometimes they have boating race or regatta with a trophy for the winners. They will go for a picnic on a sand bank in the river or in a mango-grove a few miles across the field. They have *Kirtans* and *bhajans* to which they respond with all their heart being intensely devout. When there is a festival like the *Durga Puja* or *Holi* or *Rathajatra*, the whole village goes wild with joy. There is usually a *mela* or fair on such occasions. That is a gala day for the villagers. They put on their most colourful dresses and off they all go to the *mela* grounds to get all the fun they can for their money. Occasionally a *jatra party* wanders into the village. For nights together the villagers sit spell-bound listening to the story of Rama's woeful adventures or Arjuna's heroic exploits.

5. The villagers are essentially a simple, generous, lovable people and not in the least corrupted by the pleasures which they so heartily enjoy.

Town life vs. Country or Village life

Points: 1—Both complementary to each other. 2—Attractions of the town. 3—Rural charms. 4—Balance needed between the two.

1. A city-dweller, however, much he may like his way of life, cannot but feel very tired sometimes. The air is so heavy with soot, smoke and dust. Besides, he has to keep running about so much. No wonder, he longs at moments, for a whiff of the clean fresh air of the country. The country-man on the other hand, probably finds life somewhat dull, if he does not stir out for a long time. It will then be a nice change for him to come to town. How fascinating is town life with all its hurry and bustle, its cinema-houses, theatres and glittering shop-windows. The country-man goes back to his quiet, sleepy life a good deal refreshed.

2. In our times there has set in a steady drift from the country to the town. The reasons are obvious. The town which is the seat of commerce, industry and business offers extensive scope for employment. There is a job for everybody. Besides, the ambitious man can win

for himself all the power and wealth he wants only in a big town or city. A doctor or a lawyer or a businessman can command a high four figure income only where a good number of people live and life is fairly complex. A boy can get much better education in a town or city than in a village. In a city schools and colleges are better staffed and better equipped. The university in a town attracts the students of the highest calibre. Around the university gather teachers, scholars, thinkers and writers of the greatest distinction. The elite of a country always make their home in a town or city. Stage, screen, art exhibitions, dance and music schools keep the people culturally alive. The city dwellers again develop a keen political awareness. They hear all the live issues discussed in meetings and seminars. They see no end of strikes and processions. There are so many slogans in the air. They cannot remain unaffected by all this stir and excitement.

3. By contrast life in a country-side is dull as ditch water. But it has its compensations. The poet speaks of "a bold peasantry, their country's pride." It is this sturdy, vigorous manhood, living in our villages who are the greatest reserve power of the nation. It is well said that India lives in her villages. About 85 per cent of the people are still villagers. The country-men live on rough fare but that is good and fresh. That is what builds strong bones and muscles. Again the country-men live very close to nature—green fields, blue skies, shady groves, clear sparkling brooks, and sweet bird-song. They find life a sheer joy and their imaginative lives are daily fostered by what they see and hear. There is strong fellow-feeling among villagers. They are warm-hearted, kind, generous and ready to help each other.

4. Conditions however are far from ideal either in the town or the country—the towns are getting dirty, dingy and overcrowded. Our town-planners therefore think of building "garden cities"—that is, a city with a wide green belt of the country around it. This will bring the country and city close together and give to the one what the other needs.

Holidays and how to spend them

Points: 1—Holidays, a considerable period. 2—Rest and recreation. 3—To be properly utilised. 4—Creative activities. 5—Some suggestions.

1. Every student looks forward to the holidays, with a thrill in his heart. In our schools (and colleges), we get fairly long breaks during a year—Summer, Puja and after final examination holidays. They add up to about a third of the year. This is a lot of time. If we only know how to use it well, we can do a world of good to ourselves and to others as well.

2. Our first impulse no doubt, is to shout "*hurray*" and dash about wildly very much like a dog that has slipped its collar. We are overcome by a sense of boundless leisure and freedom. That is only natural. We have worked so hard in classes. We feel a little tired of our books and think we should do nothing for a month or so but romp, play, swim and have all manner of fun. But we tire even of fun.

3. If however we know the secret of putting our leisure to creative uses, we shall never know a dull moment. Besides we shall find ourselves growing every day strong and beautiful in mind, body and character. By the way, "creative" means not merely making new things but having nice new ideas or doing beautiful deeds as well.

4. Why not go out for a good long hiking this vacation? We may go as far as Puri following the old pilgrim route or to Malda to look at the ruins of the ancient Gaur. For a time we forget the cosy comforts of home and take our chance with whatever food and shelter we get in our rough way-faring. We shall get to know our people and country. That is only a step to loving them. We come back home a much better man than we went out. We have a wider outlook, a keener observation and a kinder heart. Besides we become hard as nails for all that we have gone through. We can face life squarely whatever be the hard knocks in store for us.

5. Perhaps some of us love reading. In classes-going-on-time we are too much taken up with our text-books and home-work and do not get much chance to read all the books that appeal to us. Here is at least enough leisure for us to lie curbed up with a book and nothing in the world to worry us. We read about Robinson Crusoe's life in the lonely island, Tom Brown's adventures at his school, Lincoln's and Gandhiji's noble and inspiring life, the absorbing story of inventions and discoveries, or the thrilling account of the World War II. We shall be surprised to find how much we know at the end of a month.

We owe a duty to our less fortunate fellow men. Many of them are ignorant and backward in our own village. It is quite possible for us to collect a few of them and teach them the three R'S. We will find them quite eager to learn. We will thus do our little bit in helping the general drive against illiteracy which is most essential if our democracy has to have any meaning.

These are some of the ways in which we can use our holidays to the best advantage. We should have our fun. But we should take good care to develop our mind and soul in all this time we get to ourself.

City Parks

Points: 1—Introduction. 2—Ordinary man's need. 3—Utility of fresh air and light. 4—Usefulness of a park. 4—Conclusion.

1. City Parks have been fitly described as the "lungs of a city." Under modern conditions, a city is terribly over-crowded. Land prices being absurdly high, every square inch of space is built up. As a result we have dark, narrow blind streets and dingy, damp houses closely huddled together. There are no doubt parts of the city where streets are broad and there are houses with fine lawns; but only the wealthy can afford to live in those quarters. The main bulk of the people are condemned to live out their days in stuffy little holes.

2. This cannot but tell on the health of their body and mind. A child needs lots of fresh air and also open space for the free play of his young limbs. A man when he comes back home jaded after the day's work also feels the need of a cool breeze to refresh himself. An old man can only keep fit if he has his morning and evening stroll in an open space with the fresh breeze blowing on it. The city parks are the only places he can go to for these elementary conditions of healthful living.

3. Besides fresh air and open space, a park has a gay, bright look which makes everybody feel jolly and cheerful. The grounds are edged with shrub or plants, kept carefully trimmed. Every here and there, there are beautiful flower-beds. These look like bright patches of colour on the green grass of the park. It is a little heaven for the little children. They get lots of fun going up and down on the see-saw, climbing up the ladder, slipping down the slide, jumping into the sandpit, taking turns at the swing or whirling on the merry-go-round. The air is alive with their shout and laughter. They, in fact, make up much of the charm and gaiety of the place, flitting about like colourful butterflies in their gay clothes. Sometimes they cluster with greedy eyes round a hawker who sells them toothsome delicacies—sweets, golgoppas, pakoras and other nice things. Sometimes they run to a toy-vendor, loaded from head to foot with blown-up balloons, mouth-organs, tin whistles, pop-guns and so many other things. The older boys play cricket or football on the grounds. When the elderly people stroll round the tar-mac path bordering the grounds, they have to be careful against a ball hitting them by chance.

4. It is a pity, however, that the parks are not looked after as well as they should be. It is up to the municipal or corporation authorities to keep them trim and nice. Sometimes the grounds of the park are encroached upon by some tennis or cricket club who build up their pavilion inside the park taking up a lot of space. This practice should be definitely discouraged by the authorities. It should be always remembered that the general health of a city population depends very much on the proper maintenance of city

parks. The more we have of them, the more will our standard of health and fitness go up.

Blessings of good health

Points: 1—Importance of health. 2—Health and happiness. 3—Balance between body and mind. 4—Poor health of students. 5—Need for proper steps.

1. Health perhaps is the one thing which makes life worth living. Once a humorist was asked the same old question, "Is life worth living?" Promptly he made his punning reply "that depends on the liver." We do not expect a man with a bad old cough and gouty joints to take much interest in life. A certain philosopher laments that life is nothing but "a vale of tears." We may very well suspect that he had a very poor digestion which made him take a gloomy view of things.

2. What, however, makes that tramp so jolly? He sleeps in the hay-stack under the stars. Still he sings lustily as he goes way-faring along the dusty roads. He overflows with health and vitality. That is the secret of his high spirits. A thoughtful writer has described health as "the blessing of the rich and riches of the poor." Truer words were never spoken and spoken so very well.

3. A man however may be just a healthy beast and nothing more. That is hardly desirable. It is all very fine to have big biceps and triceps, and beat records in all the field and track events. But this champion athlete may be, after all, dull and damped in brain and spirit. Life, in fact, loses much of its significance if we do not enrich our minds with the knowledge and wisdom which the past ages have handed down to us. It is absolutely essential for the higher purposes of life to achieve a fine balance between brain and brawn.

4. It is a pity, as health surveys have shown, that the physical standards of our students are very poor. Most of them are under-weight. Defects of teeth and eye-sight are pretty common. It is truly pathetic to see a young graduate with thin chest, pale face and sunken eyes and wearing thick glasses. He cannot be of much

use either to himself or his country. Our living conditions, particularly in overcrowded cities, are deplorable. We do not get enough vitamins and calories which make the blood rich and the bones strong. The national Government should make a big drive to bring this shameful state of affairs to a close, if the country is to survive. It is actually a question of existence.

5. The western countries have given top priority to the health of their people. The wonderful dynamism, the spirit of high adventure, the grand achievements of science and technology, the marvellous records in sports and athletics which we find among those fortunate nations are mainly due to their superb standards of physical stamina and well-being. While building up the new generations in our free India, we should turn to the shining example which those countries offer to us.

Choice of Books

Points: 1—Too many books. 2—Choice needed. 3—Classics, their effects on the reader.

1. What to read next? We have all felt worried by that question at one time or another. One cannot possibly read all the books in the National Library or the British Museum. Life is too short for that. Further, there is the strict limitation of human memory and intelligence. We cannot hope to master every branch of knowledge nor read every book that is written on that subject. The printing presses of the world roar away all the time and keep pouring out books, more books, and still more books.

2. Thus if we are not wise enough to choose our books, we are lost. The only alternative is not to read at all but few will like that idea and choose to grow up stupid and ignorant.

It is the general reader who feels most harassed by this question of the choice of books. Those who specialise in a particular subject are not confronted with such a problem. They have their standard text books. Besides, their teacher or research guide chalks out for

them all that they have to read to qualify in their particular line.

3. But when it comes to general reading—to reading with a view to develop culture of mind and feelings—the reader feels sorely puzzled about what to read and what to leave unread. He feels all the more confused when he finds that the reviewers hail even every worthless play or novel as a great masterpiece. But, masterpieces are hardly written at the rate of a dozen or more a year in any circumstances. They have to stand the test of time. If books written fifty, hundred or more years ago are still worth reading, they are by this one simple and fool-proof test stamped as masterpieces or classics. Charles Lamb, a great lover of books used to say, "When a new book comes out, I read an old one." Thus the average reader will be on reasonably safe ground, if he starts with classics. He may put down on his reading-list novels of Dickens, Dumas, Hugo and Stevenson, poems of Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson and Browning, plays of Shakespeare, Shaw and Ibsen.

When Victor Hugo was exiled for political reasons to an island, a friend asked him what he was going to do to make himself feel happy in such circumstances. "I do not worry," said Hugo, "I shall be quite happy, listening to the waves and reading my Shakespeare." That is the great virtue of classics. They call forth all that is best in us. Besides, they form our taste and judgment and that is what we need most while we go exploring the world of books.

Novel reading

Points: 1—Objections against novel reading. 2—Some evil effects. 3—Some benefits. 4—Conclusion.

1. There is usually a feeling among parents and teachers that young people should not read novels. But however they may try to ban such reading, the young people somehow get hold of the forbidden books and read them on the sly. It is not difficult to understand the attitude of the guardians of the young. A good many of the novels are no more than

trash. The story is very often silly or sentimental or over-passionate. It deals with adult emotions or complex motives which is very much beyond a youngster's range of experience. While reading such stuff, he may get the wrong complexes or suffer from emotional upsets.

2. Besides, a youngster may get so fond of reading such books, which require hardly any mental effort, that he may get lazy and soft-headed. He may find physics too dull or algebra too tough. Rather than bother his head about such things, he thinks it more worth-while to get back to his half-finished novel. He has left his hero in a most desperate situation, gagged and tied up in a dark den by a set of blood-thirsty ruffians. What is going to happen next? The young reader sometimes turn to sheer day-dreaming, losing his power of action and his grip on life. He may fancy himself a millionaire who finds it quite easy to sign a four-figure cheque or a hero whom the fairest woman cannot but love. This is very much like Alnashkar's dream in the Arabian Nights. No wonder that those who have to keep an eye on the morals and manners of the young fell suspicious about novels.

3. There are however novels and novels. Instead of banning outright all novels for the young, the guardians should do well to put in their hands the right books in this kind of literature. Novelists like Dickens, Hardy, Bankimchandra, Tagore and Saratchandra are the great masters of joys and sorrows. They have given us marvellous pictures of the social scene which they describe. Their insight into motives and characters of men and women is nothing short of wonder. We gain in love and pity for our fellow men through their pages. We feel thrilled when we see to what great height the spirit of man can rise as we find in Gora or Ramesh struggling against all that is cruel and evil in society and government.

4. The right type of novels can be a most bracing experience for the young reader. He can widen his mental horizons—make him wise, tolerant, critical and observant. He only needs a little guidance in choosing his books.

Newspaper reading

Points: 1—Craving for news. 2—Definition of news. 3—Educative value of newspapers. 4—Reports how the country is progressing. 5—Develops our sense of mission to the country.

1. We are, all of us, very news-hungry living as we do in a world where one wonderful thing or another is happening everyday. Revolt in Algiers, Civil war in Congo, Gagarin in outer space, Subba Row hits up a century. These and many more made headline news in their day. They gave us a nice good thrill while we sat sipping our morning cup of tea.

2. "When a dog bites a man," said Lord Northfield, "it is not news, but when a man bites a dog, it is news". What he meant was that news must be something unusual, strange or wonderful. It cannot otherwise capture the minds of the people. No doubt we have a natural taste for reading sensational events. That, in fact, makes us read a report about a murder, riot, or a bank-robbery with more than ordinary interest. But a reader gets much more good out of his daily paper than merely satisfying his greed for sensations.

3. That an hour we give to our newspaper is thoroughly well-spent. It can be highly educative, if we only know what to look for in the paper. The newspaper brings the world to our door. We can hardly open the paper without feeling that we and our country are only a part of the big world outside. What happens in Burma or Iraq cannot but have its effect on the rest of the world. Who knows that the trouble in Cuba or Laos may not lead to the next world war? We can thus become an intelligent student of the currents and cross-currents of world affairs. This not only sharpens our critical faculty but immensely widens our mental horizons.

4. It is only in the columns of newspaper that we can learn how our own country is faring. If there is flood or famine or earthquake or railway accident in any part, we at once get to hear about it. We learn how "free India" is grappling with her great problems

—fighting against ignorance and want and making an all-out drive for a welfare state.

5. When we read our paper, we feel that we too have a part to play in this great human drama. We do not feel isolated. Imagine ourselves living like Robinson Crusoe in a desert island. We have to go without many things which make life pleasant for us. But the thing we are likely to miss most will be our morning daily.

Advantages of city life

Points: 1—Broad distinction between town and country life. 2—Amenities of town life. 3—Its intellectual tone.

1. "He who is tired of London", said Dr. Johnson "is tired of life". He, in fact, had nothing but contempt for the people who get sentimental about the green fields, duck-ponds and the grazing cows of the countryside. In his own downright style, he damned such fools by saying, "those who are content to live in the country, are fit for the country." It is easy to see what he meant. If a man really cares for the things of the mind, the city is the place for him. Those, on the other hand, who have no such interests, get quite fond of the country life and its many pleasures. They too are happy in their own way very much as the cows feel happy on their green pastures.

2. The city has, further, a good many material advantages which make an irresistible appeal to men of taste and fashion. In Calcutta for example, if a man has a fat enough purse, all the pleasures of life are his. He can order a five-course dinner at Great Eastern (hotel) or drop in for a cabaret show at Grand (hotel). He can see "Setu" at Biswarupa and "Shreyasi" at the Star Theatre. For the pictures featuring his favourite stars, he may have a box at Metro or Lighthouse. Besides, there is Sarkar's magic performance, Raymond's circus show, Russian ballet, art exhibitions and what not. Life is a whirl of pleasure year in and year out. Again there are beautiful lakes and parks, clean broad asphalt roads, blazing with lights at night, big departmental stores where he can get anything which

money can buy, a marvellous transport of trams, buses and taxis. If he is ill, he can go to the best specialists or have a bed in an up-to-date nursing home or hospital. The city it seems is the only place which can provide him with all the comforts and luxuries he cares for.

3. For a cultured man, however, the main attraction on the city lies in its brisk intellectual atmosphere. That, in fact, made Dr. Johnson such a great admirer of London. One meets people who take an interest in ideas, who talk about books and authors, music, painting and sculpture. He can debate vigorously about the live issues of politics. He does not get a dull moment to himself. He feels all the time mentally alert, keeping his ears and eyes open. This is the kind of life which an intellectual man likes more than anything else.

Disadvantages of city life

Points: 1.—Outward glamour of city life. 2—Some of the typical disadvantages. 3—Slums. 4—Hurry and bustle, their evil effects.

1. City life has its many blessings which will perhaps occur to everybody as soon as the subject is mentioned. Schools, colleges and libraries, doctors, nursing homes and hospitals; fine houses, good roads, and parks, cinemas, theatres and hostels—the catalogue may easily get much longer. But there is another side of the picture which is not so lovely. Life in Calcutta or Bombay is not equally nice and gay for everybody. Except for a fortunate few, many of the city-dwellers find life pretty dull if not dreary and many others find it a living hell, to put it mildly.

2. It is notorious how after a storm-shower the streets of our metropolis go under water. In fact boats can come sailing up to main thorough-fares from the low-lying areas of the Dhakuria lakes and beyond. The office-goers find it the worst possible ordeal to board a tram or bus at peak hours. They all get themselves packed like sardines. And they are all the time sweating, puffing, quarreling and sometimes coming to blows.

In dwellings too people have to live in poky little tenements where they hardly get a breath of fresh air. In summer it gets much worse and boils, blisters and prickly heat make people suffer the worst torments of hell. The narrow lanes and by-lanes stink with rotten garbage, the municipal service is so slack and inefficient. The hospitals are poorly staffed and very much short of beds. Schools and colleges are so overcrowded that it is always difficult if not impossible to get admission if we do not have a special pull. Food-stuffs are mostly adulterated.

3. The worst plague-spots of a city are however its slums. The bustees of Calcutta and chawls of Bombay are notorious for their dirt, stink and squalor. A family of six or seven live huddled together in a single room with mud walls and tin or tile roof. It is a shame and a scandal to let people go on living in that way, no better than pigs in their sty.

4. The worst thing in city life is, however, its hurry and bustle. The pace of life is very fast. From dawn to dusk we are all the time running after something or other. People are feverishly pursuing money, success and pleasure. There is too much greed and too much competition. And the society is fast losing the old set of values in modern cities. The record of crimes, accidents, suicides and nervous breakdowns in Western cities is, in fact, reaching appalling figures.

Triumphs of Science

Points: 1—Science, its contributions to civilization.
2—Some modern examples.

1. The history of science has in fact been the history of civilization. They run so close together that it is hardly possible to think of the one without thinking of the other. In the old days man was weakest and most helpless of animals. He has left those days behind. He has made himself master everywhere conquering earth, sea and sky. We have become so very used to trains, trams and cars, to electric fans and lights, to planes even, that we actually take them for granted.

In fact these are some of the greatest wonders of science which in their days had revolutionized our ways of life. A reference book draws up a long list of four hundred inventions and discoveries, old and new, which have a lasting effect on the course of human civilization. The list might be easily made a good deal longer. Among the many wonderful items, we come across Bessemer's steel, Faraday's light house, Nordenfelt's submarine, Curie's Radium and Rontgen's X-rays. H. G. Wells while summing up the grand achievements of man in his well-known "*History of the World*" writes with prophetic fervour "*With the earth as his footstool man will reach out his hand among the stars.*" His vision has come true when in our times we see *Cosmonauts** exploring the outer space in their rocket planes.

2. To take at random a few more startling inventions which may well be described as "*Triumphs of Science*", Dr. Roscoe Smith, an American, has designed and built a giant X-ray plant for the treatment of cancer. It has cured hundreds of victims of this dreadful disease for which even the resources of modern medicine and surgery have failed to conquer so far. Another marvellous instrument, the "Iron Lung", keeps alive patients whose lungs are too weak to work and whom the doctors would otherwise have given up. Some of the modern streamlined cars and steam-boats have reached marvellous record of speed. Captain Eyston's huge racing-car *Thunderbolt* touched a speed record of 357.5 miles per hour. Campbell's famous racing-boat *Bluebird* set up a world record with a speed of 130.86 miles per hour. One of the most brilliant inventors of our times is Sir Frank Whittle who has constructed the jet-propulsion engine. We now find it quite possible to have our tea at Dum Dum, our lunch at Cairo and dinner at the other end in London. We have the great good fortune to live in very exciting times—in this jet age—when there always seem to be some new wonder round the corner.

* *Cosmonauts*—sky navigators.

Electricity in daily life

Points: 1—Early history. 2—As used in this country.
3—In western countries.

1. The history of electricity is one of the most fascinating chapters of science. It is the one single big factor, so to say, which has made modern civilization possible. It was Thales, a Greek living in far-off times, who rubbed a piece of amber and found it charged. The *loadstone* was found to possess magnetic virtues and the Chinese travellers used a loadstone figure, turning on an axis, as their compass while crossing deserts. The head of the figure always pointed to the north.

Electricity has become to man a kind of Aladin's lamp. He can convert it into light, heat or power just as he pleases. He has only to reach out for the switch to get one thing or the other done. So it has been beautifully said that modern civilization is built on loadstone-amber. Thales blundered upon a "power" with very little idea about the marvellous uses to which it could be put. A long line of scientists from Thales to Maxwell, from Gilbert to Oersted and Faraday, from Franklin to Kelvin, Marconi and Hertz have given us the modern wonders of electricity. They have made life for the average man infinitely cosy and comfortable.

2. In India we are a good deal behind the western countries in the very many uses of electricity. Still life in a big city like Calcutta or Bombay would instantly come to a standstill in case of failure of electric power. On a hot July day, we could hardly get any sleep far less work, if the fan whirling overhead did not give us a little relief. People in these days are getting their rooms air-conditioned, if they are rich enough. They feel as fresh and cool as ever, even if the tar melts on the road outside. Calcutta at night becomes a blaze of light and we do not feel it is very different from the day. The *Neon* advertisements boost up the trader's sales. The traffic signals flashing red, amber and green give fool-proof directions to every driver at all hours. The trams rattle past, taking people to all parts

of the big sprawling city. The electric trains have largely solved the transport problem of the suburban dwellers: The wireless which brings the world to our armchair is another wonder of the electricity. We are looking forward to the television.

3. If a man happens to be in New York or London, he will marvel at the numerous electric gadgets those people use. In a man's home, he will find the playroom has a heater and electric toys. In the bathroom, there are electric razor and towel driver. The water is heated by an immersion heater in the cistern. The hall is heated by an electric radiator and swept by a suction cleaner. The kitchen is furnished with a refrigerator, kettle, cooker, toaster, coffee-pot, washing machine and what not. The day is not far distant when our Indian homes will have all the things and more.

Space flight

Points: 1—Gagarin's achievement. 2—Followed by Alan Shepherd. 3—Early experiment by a German scientist. 4—Vast possibilities. 5—Some old myths destroyed, hope for the world.

1. The 12th April, 1961 will always stand out as a fateful day in the history of man. Newspapers all over the world came out with the banner headline about "the first man in space." The man was no other than Russia's Uri Gagarin. In his space-ship "Vostock", he soared beyond the pull of gravity and went round the earth. The wonder is, he came back, safe and sound, to the earth making a perfect landing.

2. America was a close second to Russia in her research in rocketry and space flight. Soon enough, the American space pilot, Alan Shepherd hit the head lines once again. But his achievement was more limited. He only went up into the outer space and came down again. He could not circle the earth. America has still to catch up with Russia in space research.

3. All this did not happen in a day. The Germans, in fact, with their wonderful gift for research and invention, gave a lead in this respect. In the midst of the

last world war, they were running a research centre on an island in the Baltic. Willy Fielder, a technical director, was the first man, bold enough to go up in a V-1 rocket in 1943. He reached a height of roughly 28,000 feet. On landing, he said almost what Gagarin said—"This flight was wonderful". This scientist is now the head of the Rocketry and Space Navigation Department of the Lockhead Corporation in the United States of America.

4. This conquest of outer space opens up vast possibilities. The earth is getting terribly overcrowded. Already people are thinking of starting new colonies in other planets. The land speculators are even busy buying up big chunks of land in Mars. The craziest ideas of writers of space fiction seem to be not so crazy after all. We have been speculating for a long time about the canals in Mars. We shall soon know once for all whether the Martians actually live on that planet and what kind of civilization have they built up in course of centuries. The Moon has been something about which poets and lovers have raved all this time. Some think it is made of green cheese. Others fancy there is a man in the moon. These good old fancies will soon disappear. Man is going to map out the moon with all her hollows and plains. He is also getting to know about the other side of the moon which is all the time turned away from us.

5. It is now within the range of probability to have an interplanetary rocket service with artificial space stations where the planes can stop and from where they can take off once again. These marvellous developments may very well solve some of the age-old problems of our own planet. If man gets more living space in other planets, the problems of over-population, hunger and disease will be efficiently tackled.

There will be no longer a scramble for colonies and markets and the bloody wasteful wars of the past will vanish like an evil dream. H. G. Wells while writing the last lines of his history, had a vision of this splendid future. With the earth as his foot-stool, he dreamt, man will reach out his hand among the stars.

Science in the service of man

Or,

Science in daily life

Points: 1—Ours an age of science. 2—The clock—the newspaper—and the radio—gas, coal, kerosene oil used as fuel—motor-cars, trams, buses,—books, pens, paper, ink, the type-writer, the telephone—electric fans and lights—medicines. 3—Conclusion.

1. We are living in times, well past the middle of 20th century. This century has witnessed some of the most startling inventions of Science. Russia is exploring the space with her "Sputniks." One of her citizen, Uri Gagarin has soared beyond the pull of gravity and made history by being the first man in the space. We have wonder-drugs, nylon fabrics, electronic brains, prefabricated houses which we can take along with us wherever we choose to go. As H. G. Wells dreamt, we shall soon have "men like gods," if not something still greater.

But the common man remains thankful for the less spectacular inventions—things which make his daily life less toilsome, more bright and cheerful. Luckily for us these things have been found out for us within the last few hundred years. We have now got so used to them, that we do not give them a thought. But fancy for a moment a world in which there are no books and newspapers, no electricity, no trams and cars, no medicines for some of the most dreadful diseases. You will thank the inventors over and over again for each one of these blessings. We may as well think of some of them.

2. When life was more leisurely and even lazy, we did not bother about time. But now, for many of us, our days are crowded with engagements. We are racing against time, as it were, and we cannot possibly do that without looking every now and then at the wall-clock or the wrist-watch. The newspapers and the radio keep us constantly in touch with all that is going on in the wide world. The radio songs and plays also offer very good entertainment, when we feel like relaxing. The housewife finds life so easy, if she has 'gas'

on tap in her kitchen. Coal and petroleum are indispensable fuels for running our mills and factories which make civilized life possible. The cars, trams, buses have made the transport both cheap and quick for the ordinary man. The whole life of a big city will come to a dead stop, if these things are taken off the roads. It is such things of everyday use as paper, books, ink, pens which have made possible such marvellous spread of knowledge and learning. But there was a time when none of these things existed and even the name of the first inventor has been lost in the mists of time.

We cannot now think of an up-to-date office without the telephone ringing every 5 minutes or the typewriter tapping away all the time. We all know what a great blessing the electric fan is on hot days, particularly in our part of the world. The streets and houses of a town now blaze with light at night. The night, in fact, is as bright as the day. That is no doubt due to the great invention of the incandescent bulbs. The vaccines and antibiotics have made life reasonably safe for us from the dread diseases like cholera, typhoid and small-pox.

3. The inventors, are in a sense, the greatest benefactors of mankind. Some of the simplest inventions again (they are not however as simple as they look) have been of the greatest benefit to us. The few inventions we have been talking about make this point plain to everybody. The great inventors have been also great humanists. They have always kept the common man and his happiness in view while working at their inventions.

Science—a friend or enemy of man ?

Points : 1—Present picture. 2—Weapons of death and destruction. 3—Blessings of science. 4—Man not to blame science. 5—Need of wisdom.

1. The world today is on the verge of a total disaster. Every newspaper reader knows that Russia has dropped her megaton bomb on the North Pole. Clouds of atomic dust are drifting over the rest of the

globe. They will soon poison our air, water and the crops on our fields. People will get horrible burns and sores all over their bodies. The babies will grow up blind and maimed. America again is experimenting with death-rays which will kill every man, beast or bird that comes within their range.

2. Since the World War II, the nations of the world have been mostly busy perfecting the instruments of death and destruction. The old weapons like stenguns, grenades and howitzers seem to be very much out of date and fit only for the museum. We hear in these days only of atomic stock-piles, ballistic missiles and cobalt-bombs. The two power-blocs hate each other enough to start fighting on the least provocation. What stops one side from throwing the first bomb is the fear that the other side may hit back with a smashing blow. It is often said that in the next war there will be neither victor nor vanquished, for everybody will be either dead or dying.

The nations have, no doubt, acquired this terrible striking power owing to marvellous developments of science and technology. That is why there is a tendency to damn science as an enemy of man.

3. But human civilization would hardly have been what it is today without the splendid achievements of science. The conquest of land, of air, and of water, in fact, of all the forces of nature have been some of the great landmarks in the march of human progress. A network of railways link together the towns and cities all over the country. The great ocean-liners sail over vast stretches of water. The jet-planes shoot across the space with a speed, faster than sound. The television and wireless brings the world to our door. There is hardly any disease which the doctors cannot cure today with the immense resources of the art of healing. With the X-ray, the doctors can find out what is wrong deep within the human system. Everybody has heard of the wonderful virtue of penicillin, antibiotics and sulpha-drugs. The terrible epidemics like cholera, typhus and plague which carried off thousands of people once they broke out, have now lost their terrors.

5. The point is, science by itself is neither a friend nor an enemy of man. It is merely an objective search after truth or knowledge. If man is wise or imaginative enough to make proper use of his knowledge, he can easily make this world a much better place to live in. Already the scientists are talking about "atoms for peace." That is the most hopeful sign of our times. It shows that the most intelligent section of mankind are in earnest about saving the human civilization. If on the other hand nations give way to hatred, jealousy and anger, the world cannot by any chance survive. Man should not only have knowledge but wisdom as well for the progress and welfare of the world.

Olympic Games

Points : 1—Olympic games, their world-wide appeal. 2—Link with the past. 3—Olympic games in Greece. 4—Their modern revival.

1. The Olympic Games, where world records are made, are sure to hit the headlines every time they take place. Last time in 1960, all eyes were turned in Rome. The sports fans are already looking forward to the thrilled-packed events of the next Olympics of 1964 in Tokyo. The sporting world cannot but feel deeply interested in the Olympic records. The sportsmen and athletes in our local clubs get from them an idea of the highest standards of skills, strength and endurance. They keep trying, as much as they can, to approach the records of the Olympic champions like Kuc in 5000 metres, Dumas in High Jump or Conolly in Hammer Throw. India has not so far made much of a record. It is, however, fairly creditable that she won the Hockey Championship three times on the Olympic grounds.

2. The Olympics have a link with the past. They take us back to the days of old Greece. The Greeks loved beauty in all forms and they themselves were a beautiful, strong-limbed people. The old statues show us what a fine people they were. They built up their strong and graceful bodies by vigorous manly sports and exercises.

3. Once in four years the Greeks held the Olympic Games which have come down to us. They took their name from Olympia, the town where they were held. The Greeks, in fact, observed this festival to please their gods for their favours. There was something like a stadium where the events were held. People from far and near all over the country flocked to the place on this occasion. It is curious, however, that only men were admitted.

The day opened with sacrifices offered to the gods. Running, boxing, leaping, wrestling and throwing the discus were main events of athletics. Arts were also not overlooked. There were competitions in dancing, music and poetry. The last event, one of the most picturesque in the whole series, was the chariot-race.

The winner was taken back to his city by cheering crowds of his fellow citizens. He did not enter the city by the usual gate. A special gate was made for him by making a breach in the wall.

4. This beautiful festival vanished like many old and beautiful things in course of history. In 1896, a Frenchman, Monsieur Pierre revived them again and Athens was the venue for the first Olympics. During the two world wars, they were not held. In our times women are not barred out. They are the most colourful and thrilling event in the sporting calendar of the world.

Value of sports

Points : 1—The Englishman's love of sports. 2—Their importance for individual and the nation. 3—A joyful activity. 4—Hero-worship for sportsmen. 5—An effective substitute for war.

1. The Englishmen are great lovers of sports. Not merely that. They firmly believe that sports have a good deal to do in building up the character. Some of the common English expressions show this English attitude to sports. "*To play the game*" means in English "to act honourably." "*That's not cricket*" means "that is hardly fair." When

we say of a man, "He is a sportsman," all that we mean is, he is "frank, generous and free from petty spite." "The battle of Waterloo," said the Duke of Wellington, "was won on the playing-fields of Eton"—an oft-quoted sentence which has passed into a proverb. No less a person than Sri Rajagopalachari once said, "One of the finest gifts of England to India has been the game of cricket."

2. Sports, which include both games and athletics, have a remarkable importance in our individual life as well as our collective life as a nation. The individual feels an urge to attain the highest standards in body-building. Besides he acquires stamina and skill. He gains distinctly in personality. He learns to be a good loser. His morale reaches high standards; he learns to take hard knocks. He discovers the value of discipline and team-work. A genuine sportsman is bold, frank, generous and outspoken. A nation again is as strong as the individuals who make it up. If we want to build up a first class nation, we have to take our sports more seriously.

3. Sports are in the first place a joyful activity. The zestful competition, the free play of limbs, the skill of the game and the applause of the spectators all combined make the atmosphere electric for the sportsman. When he saves a goal or when smashes a tennis ball or sends the stumps flying or scores a boundary, the player feels his heart thumping wildly in the midst of the burst of applause around him.

4. The top-class sportsmen inspire the highest hero worship. Who knows not the names of Amarnath, Mankad, Pankaj Roy, Krishnan, Dhyanchand and Manna? Among the foreigners the names of Bradman, Worrel and Zatopek are house-hold words all over the world.

5. Sports may in fact, be an effective substitute for war. There is something essentially combative or aggressive in human nature. This primitive impulse or blood-lust is in the last analysis, a cause of war from time to time. It is possible to sublimate this brute impulse through world-wide organization of sports. The Olympics where the sportsmen of all nations gather

and meet each other promote international understanding on a big scale. Some day the world will be too sports-minded to care any further for wars.

Travelling

Points : 1—Age of speed, essence of travelling lost. 2—Travelling in the old days—leisurely, enjoyable and educative. 3—Modern travelling—its good and bad points.

1. In this jet age, our old ideas of travelling have radically changed. We wonder, however, whether the change is all for the best. Men go round the world at supersonic speed with a few stop-overs at places which are as far apart as Jakarta, Honolulu, Canton, Tokyo or Equador. They hardly get any leisure to see the country or meet the people through which they pass. Even the much slower railway journey does not give them the opportunity of leisurely observation. Without that, travelling does not mean much for anybody. One might as well stay at home.

2. The most glorious days of travelling belonged to an age, a couple of centuries away from us. Those were the days of the stage-coach in western countries. In this country people went to far-off shrines either by lazily drifting down a river in a country boat or by simply foot-slogging over endless miles. The stage-coach would stop at every inn fifteen or twenty miles apart. The passengers would get down for a drink or a bite while the horses were changed. The chubby red-faced inn-keeper was ready with all his local gossip. The travellers quaffed wine, cracked jokes and met each other. That kind of travelling was really educative. They came close to the country and the people. They could give their attention to the manners, customs, institutions and the way of life which the people followed in the part of the country. They could study the flora and the fauna. The sons of noble families in the old days in Europe rounded off their education with a "grand tour". They meant by that a journey through the principal cities of Europe with their treasures of art and culture.

3. Modern travelling however has its compensations. It is much better organized. The time-factor is negligible. The well-known travel agencies take care of everything—booking, luggage, accommodation. The government tourist offices show the traveller round places of interest, explain to him everything about the art, architecture, painting, antiquities and the rest of them. But with the guide rattling away all the time, the traveller gets little chance to use his own eyes and ears. So these conducted tours become somewhat dull and lifeless. The modern traveller has to adjust himself to the changed circumstances. He should travel jet by all means and save time. But at the same time he should stay long enough in a place to know it a little more intimately. If he merely makes a dash from one place to another, he will miss the very essence of travelling.

Discipline

Points: 1—Importance of discipline. 2—Physical discipline. 3—Mental discipline. 4—Example of a school-boy. 5—Discipline in corporate life—conclusion.

1. "Discipline"—it is so easy to spell and say a short simple word like that. To the thoughtful mind, however, it is a momentous word. It inspires the mind with awe and reverence. It touches life at many levels—both the life of the body and the life of the mind. It is a marvellous force both in the life of the individual and the affairs of a nation.

2. To take a few simple instances. We have all seen a tiny tot, toddling about. It learns to walk firmly only after it tumbles down a number of times. The swimmer flounders in the water, gulps a few mouthfuls and chokes himself while learning to swim. The cyclist has to take a few tosses before he can spin along merrily on the wheels. What they are all going through is a discipline of limbs and their nervous mechanism.

3. But what is more vital for progress is discipline of the mind. We admire a scientist like Einstein or a philosopher like Kant as disciplined thinkers. No doubt

they were mentally much more gifted than the average man. But over and above they trained themselves to think clearly, logically and with the greatest concentration on the problem in hand.

4. Even at the school level, we find one boy can work out the riddles of geometry better than the rest, he can write a well-reasoned, convincing essay which others cannot. He can make his points better in a debate. No doubt the intelligence factor is there. But that cannot explain everything. He has, of course, taken some trouble to train his mental faculties on the right lines.

5. In corporate life, where a large number of people live together, the need for discipline is of primary importance. Without it civilized life is well-nigh impossible. Unless we are prepared to respect a social code or abide by the law of the land, we shall have jungle law. The language riots of Assam and the boundary riots in several parts of India are still fresh in everybody's memory.

6. Man today is about to explore the secrets of "the mysterious universe." His "sputnik" expeditions into space may lead to marvellous revelations. But there is no denying the reign of discipline even in the boundless space. The stars in their courses roll along through ages without crossing each other's path or clashing with each other. This is the grandest discipline that human imagination can dream of.

Choice of companions

Points: Need for caution. 2—Not always possible to choose our company. 3—Importance of well-formed character. 4—Companions need not be alive in taste, views, etc.

1. There is no doubt need for a certain caution in choosing our friends. We cannot escape their influence for good or evil particularly when they are most of time around us. When the mind is young and impressionable, such influence is all the more strongly felt.

2. We cannot however always choose our own company. At school or college or elsewhere in life, we

are likely to come across people whom we cannot by any means call decent. It takes all sorts to make the world. Some of them are possibly cads, some bullies, some snobs and some downright nasty with a taste for broad jokes and rough pranks. We have to get on with such people as best we can without being rough and offensive or starting a row. It all depends on our own sense of tact. Life is like that. We do not expect we shall have only decent and cultured people around us all the time.

3. But what to do in such unhappy circumstances? The easiest thing is to slide into the ways of those around us and be as noisy and nasty and vulgar as any one of them. But that will be most regrettable and no body will regret it more than we ourselves. Our best defence will be our own innate decency and dignity of character and our personal taste and judgment. These things we acquire mainly by a good upbringing at home, by an admiration for all that noble and beautiful in life and conduct. Besides we are likely to find in most places a few good honest souls, or a few who are refined and intellectual. We may form a kind of inner circle of our own with these hand-picked few and resist whatever harmful influence we may have to face from undesirable society.

4. It is said, "Birds of the same feather flock together." No doubt when people are of like taste and temperament, they naturally come close together. A hobby or a love of poetry or a passion for travel and adventure may serve as a common bond and lead to a life-long friendship. But it is not necessary that friends should always share each other's views or tastes or principles or even the way of life. They may even be violently incompatible, have fierce arguments and still stay friends. The choice of friends in such cases is founded on deep love and understanding of each other's character. One of the friends may be a poet, another a philosopher, another a sportsman and another a filmfan. Between themselves they make up the charm and variety of life. They also help each other widen their range of interests. Tagore was a poet and Jagadish Bose

a scientist—both the greatest of their kinds and both remained life-long friends.

Civilization

Points: 1—Material achievements. 2—Progress. 3—Luxuries and comforts. 4—Essence of civilization.

1. We live in the jet age. Only the other day, Gagarin circled the earth in his space rocket. His fellow cosmonauts had a good look at the other side of the moon and any day they may land there. Soon we shall have space-stations. Our rockets will land there and take off again for planets like Mars and Mercury where human colonies may start growing in a few years. Wonders will never cease and we may live to see many of them happening in our time.

2. Already the catalogue of man's achievements is nothing short of marvellous. We have travelled very far away from the days when our cavemen ancestors fought the jungle beasts with their stone spears and clubs. Man has conquered nature everywhere—land, sea and sky. He has made the desert blossom. He has spanned the rivers. The television brings the world to his door. It is now just a day's hop from Calcutta to London or to any other place on earth.

3. The modern man can command for himself luxuries and comforts of a kind which even the kings and nobles of old days could not dream of. He can defy both heat and cold living in his air-conditioned house. Even offices and factories are air-conditioned. He need hardly do any work himself. There are so many wonderful gadgets which do everything for him. He has his vacuum-cleaner, his dish-washer, his gas cooking-range and hot and cold water on tap. With all the wonder drugs, he need hardly fear any disease. There will soon come a time when man will die of nothing except old age and even that day may be put off till he lives to be 140 or 150 years old.

4. But does civilization merely consist in power and plenty? With all our material comforts and luxuries we are, in that case, living in the most civilized

age on earth. But wise people do not take that view. Civilization is essentially a sense of values, a genuine regard for the things of the mind and spirit. By that standard the old Greeks like Plato and Socrates, the ancient sages of the forest-schools of India, men like Confucious and Lao-Tse in China remain for all times the highest types of civilized men. They did not care for the good things of life but gave their whole life to the pursuit of the true, the good and the beautiful. Even in our times we occasionally find a few rare souls who care more for books, painting and music and world peace than for a nice car, costly furniture or a fat bank balance. They keep out from the mad scramble for wealth, power and success. Such people are truly civilized. They live a full life. They love their fellow-men, they have beautiful thoughts, their work is creative; they do not suffer from boredom and frustration. The best hope of civilization lies with them.

Higher Secondary Education

Points : 1—Education, a matter of serious consideration. 2—Changes in Secondary education. 3—Reasons for change. 4—Recommendations of Mudaliar Commission. 5—Conclusion.

1. In free India, our leaders are giving very anxious thoughts to education at all levels. The old system is already getting a shake-up. Secondary education has by this time been fairly overhauled. Even in pre-independence days the Sargeant Scheme of 1944 prepared us for some of these changes. In 1952, the Mudaliar Commission went more fully into the whole question and made specific recommendations. It cannot be said that the Government has done things in a hurry.

2. The High Schools of our country are undergoing a very radical change. They are being converted as fast as possible into Class XI schools with diversified courses—Humanities, Science, Technology, Agriculture, Commerce, Fine Arts and Home Science—the seven streams.

The Class XI—Higher Secondary schools will thus offer a complete course in general education. The boys who pass out of these schools, may take to vocations for a living. They have a fair enough background of education to make them intelligent citizens. They may also if they are bright enough go up for higher studies in their own particular stream.

3. The changes have been introduced for certain important considerations. In this country, there has long been a craze for university education. Many of the students are not bright enough to get much good out of the higher studies. Even they will, as a line of least resistance go up to the university and crowd the classes. This leads to the lowering of standards all round. In these circumstances it is best to "weed out the unfit" at the school stage. If these students are given a fairly sound education through the 11-year course, they can right away find their way into the employment market. Instead of years of wasted effort they will have the satisfaction of earning a decent living. The gain to society, as a whole, will be by no means negligible if such a large section of its manpower becomes self-supporting so early in life. The more gifted students should by all means go up to the University and they should get every encouragement in this course. As an *intellectual elite*, they will turn out to be the leaders of thought and action. The society to which they belong will also be largely benefited by them.

4. The Government of India have taken some important steps to give effect to the recommendations of the Mudaliar Commission. There will be an attempt to set up a 'good number of Class XI Schools with diversified' course. Assistance will be given to schools for better facilities of science teaching. Liberal grants will be given to schools for improvement of school libraries. There should be more facilities available for training of teachers.

5. The whole system is still in a fluid and experimental stage. The country is, however, anxiously

watching the shape of things to come. It is a matter of highest concern to everybody.

Medium of instruction at school

Points: 1—A different problem in India. 2—Mother tongue should be the medium, reasons.

1. India has to face certain very queer dilemmas in her education. Particularly about the medium of instruction. In a country like England or France, such a problem does not simply arise. In India we have a bewildering number of tongues—Tamil, Malayalam, Guzrati, Bengali, Hindi and quite a few others.

There is a strong local patriotism in every state about the language which the majority of the people speaks. They will even go the length of forcing the minority living among them to adopt their language. Passions were roused in such instances leading to great agitation and even riots.

There are others complications as well. If a Malabari boy happens to be in Calcutta, he will not understand the teacher when he talks in Bengali. Nor can he read the Bengali text-books. By sheer force of circumstances he has to go to an English-medium school. English after all is a language which everybody still learns and has to learn for higher studies.

There is a further complication. In our higher studies at the university level, we cannot still give up English. When the boys learn everything through their mother-tongue at school, they do not care enough for their English. As a result, they find themselves badly handicapped, when they have to listen to lectures in English and read their books in English and answer their questions in English. It remains a baffling problem how to bridge this gulf between school and university.

2. In spite of these practical difficulties, it is plain commonsense that boys at school should by all means

learn through their own mother tongue. No less a person than Prof. S. N. Bose feels convinced that even at the university level education should be given through the student's mother tongue. That however is still not possible for overwhelming practical difficulties. But such difficulties do not arise at the school level.

Just fancy an English boy learning his physics or geography through Russian. He cannot but feel stupid. A good deal of the energy of a Bengali boy is wasted in learning a foreign medium. And in most cases, he learns it very imperfectly. He gets the haziest impression about the things he is required to learn through English. So he is forced very often to "*mug up*" things without understanding a word of all that he reads. His mental faculties are not properly exercised. His imagination is stunted. His power of reasoning remains underdeveloped. He cannot in such circumstances do anything in later life which can be called original or creative. This makes a farce of our education. In our schools we have no doubt switched over largely to the mother tongue. But the foreign medium of English has still a light hold on our education system in a number of ways.

Examinations as a test of ability of a student

Points: 1—Introduction. 2—Importance given to examinations. 3—Defects of the system. 4—Conclusion.

1. Examinations have been in vogue in all systems of education from time out of mind. They are a standing feature in every school, in every college and in every university in the world. A better method of testing the proficiency and progress and mental development of a large number of scholars has not yet been discovered.

2. There is hardly a student who did not get bad dreams about examinations. They are so very trying for the nerves. In our country particularly, they

are given much more importance than what is rightly their due. They are, so to speak, the only passport to top-class jobs, social position, prestige and affluence. It is all very much like carrots to the donkey. No wonder, the stakes being so high, a student drives himself as hard as he can, even to the point of a break-down, to pull off a good first class as his university final.

3. One cannot, however, help having doubts whether the examinations serve the purpose for which they are meant. Are they really a dependable yardstick for measuring a student's intrinsic worth and ability? We cannot hold it with any confidence.

As things are, examinations are more a test of memory than of knowledge. The questions follow more or less a set pattern with certain range of variations. The teachers get into the habit of teaching with an eye to the examination. They dwell more at length on the topics which are likely to figure in the question paper and deal with the rest of the subject either scrappily or skipping outright over whole portions. The students take their cue from the teachers. They go to private coaches; they may succeed. But they cannot be men of sound knowledge nor can they ever become original and creative thinkers. Those who go through the grinding mill of examinations and still show a certain daring in their thought and imagination, must be highly exceptional—a Raman or a Satyen Bose or a Radhakrishnan for example. They are what they are in spite of examinations not because of them.

4. It appears from all this that a student is not at all properly sized up by examinations alone. Our educational planners and thinkers are trying hard to make good these obvious defects but the ideal system remains far out of their reach as ever.

Village reorganization

Points: Picture of villages. 2—Gandhiji's ideas. 3—Government schemes for reconstruction.

1. India, so to say, lives in her villages. If we are to build a new India, we have to start building from the villages. The country-side, however, looks today anything but cheerful. The people are ignorant and backward. They live in appalling poverty. The ponds and wells go dry in summer and there are not enough of them. Large areas are overgrown with weed and scrub. The crops are poor. From time to time dreadful epidemics sweep over the land and carry off thousands of victims. The picture is sad enough to make everybody despair.

2. Gandhiji who knew and loved India as few else did, had a passion of making the villages better and brighter. He, in fact, lived among these simple sons of the soil at Sabarmati and then at Sewagram. Some of the ideas about rebuilding our villages are wonderfully practical. Every village, as Gandhiji suggested, should grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve pasture for its cattle. Further there should be play-grounds for adults and children. If there is further land left, it will grow money-crops. Ganja, tobacco and opium should not be grown.

The village will maintain a village hall, a village theatre if possible, and a village school. It will have its own water-works providing clean water to everybody on tap. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. The government of the village will be carried on by a *panchayet* who will be returned to office by an annual election. The panchayet will be legislature, executive and judiciary all vested to one. This will give us perfect democracy at the village level.

3. The Government of free India have started an all-out drive to build better villages. We have all heard of Community Development Projects which were started in October, 1952. This vast net-work of organization for rural uplift cover the country from one end to the

other. They are of three types. First, we have the Community Project Area. It covers about three hundred villages with some 2,00,000 people. Its chief aim is to improve agriculture and provide more and better food for the people. Secondly, there is the Development Block. It is smaller than the Community Project Area. But it takes care of many other things besides agriculture—that is to say—health, sanitation and schools. Thirdly, there the Composite Type of Development Block. It, in fact, aims at building small towns in its area. Later on, the Government launched the National Extension Service with a much wider scope of rural development than any of the above projects.

A number of workers at all levels are required for this drive. The most important of them are perhaps the Gram Sevaks or Sevikas. They actually live among the villagers and help them to make their villages clean, healthy, bright and beautiful. With better villages, India will not only be a land of plenty but she will rank among the powerful and progressive nations of the world.

The conquest of the Everest

Points: 1—Challenge of Everest. 2—History of some expeditions. 3—Conquest of the Everest.

1. The Everest, the highest peak in the world, had been for long years a great challenge to the daring climbers. The Indians have looked upon it throughout the ages with a peculiar awe as the abode of gods. The Tibetans on the other side of the mountain wall refer to this lovely majestic highest as the "*Goddess Mother of the World*." It is the most hazardous climb that anybody can think of. Snow-storms, glaciers, bottomless gorges, steep slippery heights offer a constant threat to the climbers. Many of them, in fact, have disappeared leaving behind no trace.

2. In 1922, General Charles Bruce, led a party up

the slopes. They climbed very high crossing snow-fields and glaciers but missed the top.

In the next attempt, two brave climbers Mallory and Irvine lost their lives. They reached a point well above 28,000 ft., and made their camp. From that height, they made their final assault on the peak. One of their friends, Odell, kept watching them as they climbed up. Suddenly the clouds closed in on them. They were never seen again.

This tragic event, however, did not damp the spirit of the later climbers. They returned to the attack with much greater enthusiasm than ever. Three more expeditions went out in 1933, 1936, and 1938 and all of them were beaten back by the snow storms and other dangers.

Meanwhile the climbers began to think whether it would be possible to make the attack from a different direction—from the south-west. Eric Shipton explored this route, but he too had to turn back. He was followed by two Swiss expeditions who, again, had no better luck.

3. On May 29, 1953, the world was startled to hear that the Everest was conquered at last. The two men at last stood on the virgin snows at the top of the world were the Indian Tenzing Norkey and the New Zealander Hillary. They were members of the expedition led by Sir John Hunt. He, no doubt, was very much helped by the valuable experience gained by the former climbers along the new route. Sir John made his preparation very much like a general planning a big offensive. To make sure of his supply line, he set up a chain of camps all the way up. His last camp was only 1100 feet below the summit. From this camp Tenzing and Hillary started on their last lap. Armed with snow-axes, they cut steps into the sheer mountain wall. Slow and painful was their progress. But these strong heroic spirits climbed up inch-by-inch and stood at last among the gleaming snows on the peak. It was one of the greatest triumphs of the human spirit which survives the most terrible disasters.

Rights and duties of a citizen

Points: 1—Rights entail duties. 2—The role of the State in ensuring the citizen's rights. 3—The duties of a citizen.

1. We all stand up for our rights. That is the easiest thing to do. We, however, usually forget that rights go with duties. We cannot all the time be at the receiving end. We owe as much to the society as the society owes to us. The government of the State, which represents the collective will of the people, staunchly upholds this principle of mutual benefit. It is as much the duty of the State to ensure the safety and security of the citizens as it is the duty of every single citizen to uphold the peace and stability of the State.

2. It is upto the State to ensure that every citizen's house is his own castle. In Hitler's Germany things were very much otherwise. The citizen had no peace. He dreaded the knock at the door in the early morning. It was the police. They would drag him off to the concentration camp or the torture cell and get his confession by beating him with the rubber truncheon or giving him doses of castor oil. This was the very negation of the State. The citizen was no doubt within his rights to rise against this shameful state of affairs and put an end to it.

The citizen should be duly protected against thieves and robbers, bullies, blackmailers and blackguards. These lawless elements of society should be strongly put down and life made more or less safe for everybody.

The citizen should be duly protected against external aggression. With the taxes he pays, the State will maintain its armed forces and keep a jealous watch on its borders.

The citizen has a further right to the common decencies of life—food, shelter and education for his children. This sounds very ordinary and common place. But things are in an awful muddle at the moment in our country. Most of these essential things which

lends grace and dignity to life are beyond the reach of most men.

3. What does the citizen owe to the government in return? Well, in a way every people gets the government it deserves. So the citizen should be careful to return the right type of representatives to his legislatures. He should not be swayed by bribe or other pressure tactics. Besides the police, he himself should be a champion of law and order. His morale should be high. If he finds the thief and murderer running away, he should help the police in taking them into custody. If his neighbour's house is on fire, he should be the first man to ring for the fire-brigade. He should do his part in keeping the streets and parks of his town clean and decent. When the citizens are dirty and slovenly, they make their own neighbourhood a regular pig sty. Lastly, when the enemy is at the gate, every man should fight to the last drop of his blood. In this supreme hour of crisis the country demands of him "blood, sweat, toil and tears."

Compulsory military training

Points. 1—India's peculiar position, world situation. 2—Need for military training, moral effects, training of future citizens. 3—Press-button warfare, military training still required. 4—War may be out-moded, military training still useful.

1. "Eternal vigilance," it is said, "is the price of liberty." India is free today. But she should be strong enough at the same time to guard her hard-won freedom. She cannot leave things to chance with the world situation being what it is. Her unfriendly neighbours have already encroached on her soil. They might become much more aggressive in future. The cold war in the world today may any day turn into a shooting war. In spite of her "*Panch Sheela*" and "*Ahimsa*" India may not find it possible to remain non-committal indefinitely. At any rate, unpreparedness

on her part would be a grave error of policy, jeopardising even her very existence.

✓ 2. Thus there is urgent need for the country at the moment to mobilise her youth for the defence of her borders. The best way to train a soldier is to catch him early. The Cadet Corps—A. C. C. at the school level and N. C. C. at the college level—are doing a very fine job.

(These courses offer more than a military training. They have a wonderful effect on the character and personality of the cadets who live together in camps and turn out for drill and exercise on the parade ground. They gain in stamina, they learn habits of discipline and obedience.) They are trained for teamwork and corporate living. (They have to be smart, quick-witted and resourceful. Above all they develop a high degree of self-confidence and the courage to face the world squarely.) They thus shape into worthy citizens of a free country. (They provide a reserve of man-power which the country can draw upon at the time of a national crisis.) Besides in times of peace, with their brains and stamina, they will take enthusiastically to tasks of nation-building. (They will always be an asset to the nation, whether it is peace or war.) ✓

A.C. 52 3. Again war in the old sense is already out-moded. Guns and grenades and tanks have become museum pieces. We have, so to say, entered the age of press-button warfare. Wars of the future will be fought by expert scientists and technologists from the control room by working the dials and switches. They will send the ballistic missiles and atomic warheads whizzing through the air to hit a target half way round the world. But even those operators will have need for some form of military training, which gives them stamina, steady nerves and a high sense of responsibility.

✓ 4. Perhaps war itself will be soon out-moded. The danger of mutual extermination will make every country hesitate to throw the first bomb and start a war. But still the qualities which military training fosters

will remain invaluable. It is highly desirable that it will always remain a feature of our school and college courses.

Resources of India and how to develop them

Points : 1—India, a rich country. 2—The poverty of the people. 3—Industrial and technological backwardness. 4—Signs of hope, glorious future ahead.

1. India, it is said, is a rich country where only the people are poor. True, how very true. Here if anywhere we have God's plenty. India grows all the main crops—rice, wheat, maize, pulses, tea and jute. Her mines are rich in ores—there is hardly an important mineral for which the country has to look beyond her borders—tin, mica, manganese, iron and petroleum. The gold and diamonds of India have passed into a legend, a legend going back to the days of the caravan trade between East and West. Silk, satin, spices and sandal wood were the well-known export items in the old times and made India a fabled land of luxury and refinement to the Western traders. There was a time, when the proudest beauties in the courts of Caesars rustled in the muslins of Dacca and shawls of Kashmir.

2. Still the tragic fact remains that India is shamefully poor and backward in spite of fourteen years of freedom. The foreigner has good reason to shudder at the dirt, squalor, hunger and wretchedness that hit him on the face as he goes about the country. The people go hungry. They are unclad and unshod. Many do not have a roof over their heads. The beggars swarm everywhere. Epidemics carry off thousands once they break out. The towns have a dingy and shabby look. The slums are an eyesore. The over-all picture is one of stark misery and want.

3. Why it should be like this? The plain fact is India made a late start in industrial and technological development. The industrial revolution which swept over Europe 200 years ago is just beginning in

this country. We are still sticking to the good old ways of production in all its branches. The peasant drives the wooden plough. The weaver rattles away at his handloom. The miner uses his pick and shovel. Their western counterparts have long ago switched over to tractors, power-looms and automatic drills. The primitive tools have been all put away in museums. Production after all depends on power. They have tapped all possible sources for power—coal, steam, electricity, rivers, falls and ocean-tides. The latest source of power, which to all appearance seems to be inexhaustible, is atom. Most of the progressive countries are building powerful reactors which will solve the problem of power supply once for all.

4. India is however facing a new dawn of power, progress and plenty. Her far-sighted planners have already put through two Five Year Plans and have taken up a third. The country is throbbing with a new life. Agriculture, Industry, Cottage crafts, Fishery, Mining—all the branches of production are already working full swing. Rivers are being harnessed. Power plants are springing up. Bhakra-Nangal, D. V. C., and Tungabhadra projects have drawn the notice of the whole world. The atomic reactor at Trombay has opened up tremendous possibilities. The most glorious chapters of Indian history may be written in our life-time.

Are the people happier today than they were a century ago ?

Points: 1—Picture of old times. 2—Present times.
3—A contrast. 4—Conclusion.

1. If we ask grand-dad what the old days were like, we will hear no end of wonderful things. With a dreamy, far-away look on his face, he will go on talking about those good old times that are no more. He must have heard still more wonderful things from his own grand-dad. It is always like that. No times are like the old times. This great-great-grand-dad of

ours lived round about the times of Sepoy Mutiny. Those were very restless days with armies marching up and down the country. People were sometimes nasty and cruel but sometimes again they rose to great heights of courage and heroism. Calcutta in those days had the look of a sleepy mofussil town. Much of it was covered by marsh and jungle. Pilgrims trudged over dusty country roads to offer worship at Kalighat. Horse-drawn tram-cars rattled up and down the Chitpur Road. The rich few rode about in their own coaches or palanquins. The ordinary man had to hire a hackney-coach, if he had to go very far. Women lived strictly behind the *purdah*. A high-born lady would get her dip in the holy Ganges, all boxed-up inside her palanquin, so that nobody might catch a glimpse of her person. Life on the whole was leisurely, good-humoured and un-hurried. It was joyous and high-spirited. Festivals like *Dol* and *Durga-puja* stirred people to their depths and the country was loud with joy and laughter. Those were very exciting times in a way. The country was waking up. People had already a taste of Madhusudan's great poetry. Bankim's wonderful novels were coming out, Vivekananda was stirring up the country. Tagore was growing up.

*"Bliss it was in that dawn to live
But to be young was very heaven."*

2. We have come very far away from those days, in the last hundred years. We are no longer a subject-nation. We see the face of the country changing very fast before our eyes. Huge steel factories, giant dams, big industries—all these show that our country is not lagging behind in the race of progress. Calcutta is a big bustling city with trams, double-deckers and cars rolling along its highways. We are used to comforts and luxuries which were beyond the wildest dreams of our ancestors. We have radios and refrigerators in our homes besides dish-washers and washing machines. We can live in air-conditioned houses and travel by jet to the ends of the earth in less than a day.

3. Still in the midst of all this power, progress and plenty, man feels very sick at soul. He would like to get back to the old days if he could. No doubt the past has a romance of its own. But that is not all. The world today is very cruel, selfish and competitive. Everybody for himself and Devil take the hindmost. A man feels terribly lonely and isolated. Besides, for all we know, the world is heading for a total disaster. Russia's megaton bombs or America's death-ray may blast this planet any day without a warning. In such circumstances, a man does not feel either happy or unhappy. He feels hopeless and damned.

Strength of Character

Points: 1—Character—what it is? 2—Tests of character.
3—Some examples.

1. Character is something which we cannot possibly define in so many words. It has been very well said, "*On earth there is nothing greater than man and in man there is nothing greater than mind.*" It is this power of mind which finds expression in a man's character. We, all of us, have to face little temptations. Some of our friends plan to rob a neighbour's orchard. They press me to join them in their raid. Have I enough courage to say 'no'? That is a test of character. It is this courage to say no to my tempters which mark me out as a boy of character. I see some big hefty boys ragging a timid little fellow. Have I the courage to step up to those bullies and snatch away the victim from their cruel pranks. I need character for that act of courage. Again there is nothing shameful or inglorious in feeling nervous or ever afraid. That is an impulse which a man cannot help when, facing an angry mob or when the bullets fly around him in the battle-field. Still he shall prove himself a hero if he can conquer his fear by a strong effort of will and face

the danger because he must. That is an unmistakable proof that he has gained in strength of character.

2. So the essence of character seems to be to know temptation and yet to conquer it, to know fear and yet fight it down. We are not supposed to live a quiet sheltered life shut up with four walls, away from all distracting circumstances. It is in only when man is in conflict with circumstances that the strength of his character comes out in a sudden flash.

3. To take a famous instance from the English history. In the days of Queen Mary there began a widespread persecution of the Protestants. They were even burnt at the stake according to the cruel practice of those times. Among the martyrs were Latimer and Ridley. They were tied to the stake and the hangman was about to light the fire. At that fateful moment said Latimer to his friend, "Play the man, Master Ridley. For the fire we light today will not be quenched by all the waters of the Thames." Such is the sublime height which the human character can reach. In our country too, during the days of the struggle for freedom, many a patriot died on the gallows or suffered in jails or detention camps. They, however, were never false to the cause of their country. We need not go anywhere for better instances of the strength of character.

Pleasures of life

Points: 1—True pleasures, intellectual. 2—Ease and luxury, not satisfying. 3—Pleasures of health and strength. 4—Pleasures of nature. 5—Conclusion.

1. Somebody once asked the question, "Would you rather be a pig happy or Socrates unhappy"? No doubt it all depends on what our idea of happiness is. Most of us feel happy when we have plenty of the good things of life—good food, nice suits, a smart new car and a fat bank-balance. Socrates, if he lived in our

times would not have cared for any of these things. His food was plain, so was his dress. Besides, he had a most quarrelsome wife. Still he was one of the happiest of men, loving truth and wisdom above everything else. What did his happiness spring from? It had obviously nothing to do with the pleasures of the body. He tasted as fully as any man ever did the pleasures of the mind.

2. In fact, a man who has taken some pains to develop his taste and understanding is hardly ever tempted by the ease and luxury of life. A life of thought and imagination has its own pleasures. Such a life has the greatest possible charm for the finer spirits of all ages and all countries. Diogenes, a great philosopher of Greece, went about in rags and slept in a tub. Acharya Prafullachandra Roy denied himself all comforts. He did not even have a house of his own. He lived in a room of the Science College, Calcutta and nothing gave him more pleasure than to teach his students and widen the bounds of knowledge by tireless research.

3. Everybody however may not be gifted enough for this keen intellectual life. But life itself is so full of sweet and simple pleasures. Nobody can take them away from us. An English poet sings rapturously of "*the wild joy of living*." How wonderful is life to a lusty young man! He glories in his strength. Every movement brings him a thrill of pleasure. He dives into the cool depths of water. He swings from branch to branch on the tree. He enjoys his football, jumps over fences, and runs races. Life again is a challenge to him, an adventure. He goes hunting big games, climbs mountains and crosses deserts. Life can thus be wonderfully interesting.

4. Nature again can be a source of constant pleasure. "*My hearts leaps up when I see a rainbow in the sky*," says the poet. There is no end to the wonder of nature. The sunrise and sunset are a marvellous feast of colours. The night sky with the moon and stars is something too grand for words. The

seasons come and go changing every tree and hedge and shrub. The morning air is loud with bird-song, the meadow looks fresh and green and the stream runs sparkling in its course.

5. Life however is getting very drab for us. In our city life, our pleasures too are getting mechanized and mass-produced—cinemas, theatres, restaurants and cabarets. Besides, the pace of life is getting very fast. With our cut-throat competition and feverish hurry and bustle, we are fast losing our feeling for sweet and simple pleasures. So one of our poets sings despairingly.

"What is this life so full of care

If we have no time to stand and stare."

Beauties of Nature

Points: 1—Man's instinctive love for beauties of nature. 2—Celebrated by poets, even ordinary man responds to these beauties. 3—The healing effect of nature, its need for our modern life.

1. "My heart leaps up", says the poet, "when I see a rainbow in the sky." Deep down in our nature, there is something which makes us thrill with love and wonder at all that is grand and beautiful in Nature—in land, sky or sea. "Clouds heap upon clouds and it darkens"—and it draws one of his finest poems from Tagore. "Full many a morning have I seen the sun", sings Shakespeare, "kiss the mountain-tops with a sovereign eye." Keats marvels at the "Queen Moon on her throne" and "verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways." Nature, in fact, is an inexhaustible source of inspiration for poets of all ages and climes.

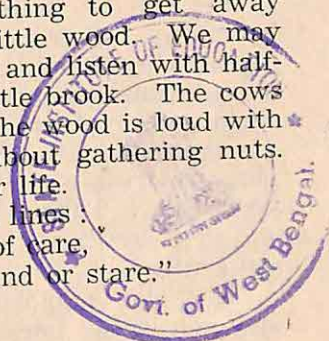
2. The poets, however, are a class by themselves. They have more than their share of imagination and sensibility. What about the average man?—the city clerk, the shop assistant, or the mill hand. He too longs to get away to the country-side or the sea-beach or the hills on a holiday. The city-dweller, no matter if he

has a fat bank-balance, cannot but feel tired of the kind of life he leads. He goes to the pictures, he dines at posh restaurants, he drives about in his smart Fiat or Austin, his room or office is fully air-conditioned. But this luxury and comfort cannot be a substitute for Nature who has a sweet, refreshing and healing quality all her own. The jaded city-dweller must also feel a strong hankering to get away from the smoke and dust of the city and run off somewhere where he can live close to nature. What could be more delightful than to ramble among the pines of Shillong, to row across the Dal lake with a glorious sunset in the sky, to stand on Cape Comorin the farthest tip of India and see the blue waves breaking on the shore, or to stand among the snows and ice of Badrinath.

3. Again, modern life is too fast in its pace. We are always in a bad hurry. Whether it is business or pleasure we are most of the time on the run to turn up somewhere. Besides we are too vexed with our worries. Thoughts of personal rivalry, profit or loss, promotion or preferment sickness or death keep us all the time deeply anxious and preoccupied. We seem all the time on the verge of a nervous breakdown. We can however forget all about this life in the midst of the large peace which Nature always offers. Nature is a great healer. It is so soothing to get away to a quiet countryside or a nice little wood. We may lie on our back on the green bank and listen with half-shut eyes to the murmur of the little brook. The cows graze peacefully on the meadow. The wood is loud with bird-song. The squirrels dart about gathering nuts. We seem, as it were, to renew our life.

We remember the well-known lines :

"What is this life so full of care,
If we have no time to stand or stare."



The right use of money

Points: 1—Characteristics of rich men. 2—Abuses of wealth. 3—Uses of wealth.

1. "It is easier for a camel to go through the needle's eye", said Christ, "than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven." It appears that even in Christ's days, a rich man was usually dishonest. One wonders whether it is at all possible to make a fortune without resorting to unclean methods. There are few things more harmful to a man's character than greed. In our times we have seen hoarders and black-marketers making huge profits while thousands of people starved and died.

2. The worst of it is that money-grabbing can become a craze by itself. A man goes on feverishly adding more and more to his pile without any idea of what he is going to do with it all in the end. Money becomes an end in itself to him. Sometimes a rich man chooses the wrong ends for himself without doing any good either to himself or to others. He makes his life a perfect orgy of pleasures. However happy he may feel with that kind of life, its one effect is to make him gross, selfish and vicious. A man who cannot plan his life a little better, has no idea of beauty and goodness. In the end he is likely to meet with boredom and frustration. Some of our American millionaires go in for an elegant and refined style of living. They buy old paintings, first editions of great writers, and costly curios. They turn their huge mansions into a perfect art museum with their collections. They sail out on pleasure trips in a luxury yacht. They own a fleet of posh cars. They have choice wines for their cellars and give lavish dinner parties. Their life too is largely self-centred, if not selfish.

3. The right use of money lies neither in hunting after pleasures nor in hoarding up millions. So it is said, "*The man who dies rich, dies disgraced.*" Money should not be an end in itself. It is a means to an end—the end being the progress and welfare of our fellow-

men. We have all heard of Alfred Nobel, the founder of Nobel Prizes. He was a Swedish chemist and inventor of dynamite. His invention with its destructive powers has no doubt done great harm to mankind but it made him one of the richest men of the world. We may not approve of his method of getting rich but he has left the world the finest example of the right use of wealth. The Nobel Prizes for the most distinguished work in Chemistry, Medicine, Physics, Literature and Peace point out what are the great causes which rich people should back up with their money. This is also the age-old lesson of India. Our kings of old gave away their all to serve the people. In one of his beautiful poems, Tagore says, "O India, thou hast taught a king to lay down his sceptre and crown." It is a pity that this fine ideal has vanished from our lives. We now see only greedy and dishonest profit-seekers whose one aim is to make money and still more money.

Rabindranath Tagore

Points: 1—Greatness of Tagore. 2—Family. 3—Contributions—to literature, society, education. 4—A great humanist.

1. Tagore is a magic name today all over the world. This year marks the centenary of his birth. The nations of the world, one and all, paid homage to this marvellous spirit on this occasion. In India, there was a signal burst of enthusiasm from one end of the country to the other. The whole country rang with song and dance and music and play for months together. A documentary on the poet's life has made a great hit. A clay-model exhibition about the main events of his life again drew huge crowds in Calcutta. For months our thinkers, writers and speakers have been dwelling on his many-sided genius.

2. The Tagores of Jorasanko in Calcutta are not only wealthy but a very talented family. For years,

they gave a lead to Bengal in poetry, music, song and painting. Into such a family was the poet born. His father Debendranath was a deeply spiritual man. People called him "*Maharshi*," the great sage, for the wonderful purity of his life. He took out the boy poet with him on his travels. In the midst of the snows and pines of the Himalayas and the lovely scenes on the banks of the Padma, the poet's imagination was first stirred.

3. There is hardly a branch of literature which he did not deal with like a master. It is amazing how a man could write so much and so supremely well. His works include more than 1,000 poems and 2,000 songs. Besides he wrote short stories, novels, plays and essays. There is the stamp of genius in every line that he wrote. He was also a musician of the highest order. Not only did he write songs but he set them to music. It is wonderful to think that when he was almost 70, he turned a painter. He has left us not less than 3,000 paintings which has opened up a new world of vision for us. The *Nobel Prize* for literature drew the eyes of the world on him and the country he came from.

4. But that is not his only title to fame. There is hardly any side of our national life on which he has not left his stamp. He lived in the stirring days of the struggle for freedom. Many of his songs fired the imagination of the young men who fought and died for their country. He started a school at *Santiniketan*. His boys lived with their teachers, played and roamed about in the wide open spaces of nature, had their lessons under the trees in the midst of bird-song and the scent of blossoms in the air. They learnt all the better for it. He believed that a child's mind should not be forced but fed and fed in a way he likes. He taught the villagers among whom he lived the ideas of self-help and co-operation. That is how he tried to build up the villages. Though he was a strong critic of the British rule, he admired the great qualities of the British race. Two of his devoted followers, Andrews and Pearson, were Englishmen. His Asram at Santi-

niketan drew the finest spirits of all nation—Frenchmen, Italian and Chinese. He was in fact a great believer in the brotherhood of all nations. But he rose against tyranny and injustice wherever he found them. It is only once in the course of ages that a man and a poet of his great stature is born among a people.

Tagore centenary celebrations

Points : 1—Tagore's universality. 2—Tributes from far and near. 3—Governments interest in the centenary. 4—Unity of nation emphasised.

The 8th of may, 1961 marked the first centenary of Rabindranath Tagore. Lord Hardinge, an English Viceroy of India once described him as "*the poet of Asia.*" That was not, however, the whole of the truth. He, no doubt voiced, as nobody else could, the hopes and aspirations of the millions of the continent, shamelessly exploited in those days by their white masters. His voice rose passionately against racial arrogance, cruelty and oppression. But he was above all a poet of humanity. His love and sympathy for mankind went much further beyond the geographical limits of his own country. Though he wrote in his native Bengali as Shakespeare did in English, in words of unmatched beauty and power, it found an echo in every heart under every sky. Language proved to be no barrier.

2. No wonder that on this occasion, all the countries of the world, far and near, paid their homage to this universal poet. The capitals of Europe and Asia rang with eloquent tributes to the poet by the greatest thinkers and writer of our times. In this corner of India, the poet's homeland of Bengal, the occasion was marked by a signal burst of enthusiasm. For a whole month, the land was alive with music, song, dance and drama. The young people in schools and colleges particularly made it their own day. The public too did not lag behind. Even quiet sleepy out-of-the-way places.

like Mahishadal, Raipur, Dinhata woke to life for once and put forth as fine a show as they could. Calcutta, which is the heart of Bengal, observed the occasion in the most splendid style. The Bengalees are notoriously emotional and the capital city of Bengal was simply delirious with rapture and excitement. There were meetings, processions, exhibitions. The theatres staged Tagore's plays. The picture-houses screened Tagore films. The cultural organizations came out with their lively programmes of dance and song. The exhibition of clay models, high-lighting the main events of Tagore's life was a great draw.

3. It is to the eternal credit of the Government of India that they made an all-out drive to make the centenary a tremendous success. The 8th May was declared a public holiday. Every Indian city and town reverently observed the day in places as far off as Patiala, Trichinopalli, Jabbalpur, Benares and Bhubaneshwar. Satyajit Roy's marvellous documentary about the poet's life and achievements has made everybody realize vividly Tagore as man and poet.

4. The centenary has once again strongly emphasised that India is one. The nation as a whole has done homage to the poet. In these days of language riots, and boundary quarrels and communal flare-ups, the realization of this marvellous unity of spirit is a very great gain for the nation.

Autobiography of a Great Man

Points: 1—Main characteristics of the book. 2—Some typical events of life described. 3—The greatness of the man and the leader.

1. Mahatma Gandhi in his own life-time was the greatest champion of truth and non-violence. It has been said of Christ, *"there has been only one Christian and he died on the cross."* Since Gandhiji fell to the bullet of a fanatic, there has probably been no second

man like him, pure and non-violent alike in thought, word and deed. He very aptly named his autobiography, "*My experiments with truth.*" Truth was the very pole-star of Gandhiji's life. On one occasion he said, "*Truth is God, and God is Truth.*" Gandhiji's book is the history of a soul. He took the world into his confidence about his doubts, misgivings, lapses and failures. To quote his own words, he made it a practice always "*to turn the search-light inwards.*" That is how this noble and heroic soul strove hard in his search for truth which he held dear above everything else. It is an endlessly fascinating book and it is so fascinating because it is so frank. Gandhiji had no reserves. He laid his soul bare to the gaze of the world.

2. When Gandhiji sailed for England to study for the bar, his mother made him take a vow. He should not touch meat or drink. It was not easy to keep such a vow while living in the midst of the English society. Young Gandhi was coaxed, tempted, and even laughed at by his friends but nothing would make him budge an inch from his word.

When he began his practice in Bombay, he would never take up a brief unless he first convinced himself that the client had a just case. Once in the midst of a case, he found out that his client did not come out with all the facts before the judge. Even at the risk of losing his case, he made the client speak out everything without hiding a single fact. His standard of professional morality had not probably been reached by any other lawyer at any time.

3. Following the same steadfast principle, he brought morality into the dirty game of politics. His politics, in fact, was quite free from dirt. It was absolutely clean and sweet without the least trace of hate or bitterness. As he himself said, "*I am trying to introduce religion into politics.*" Thus it was that he won the rights for the Indians in South Africa from General Smuts and fought the mighty British Government to a stand-still. But he would always retrace his

steps whenever he felt that he was in the wrong. Thus he said, in a famous phrase, that *it was a Himalayan blunder on his part to launch the Satyagraha* when the peasants at *Chauri Chaura* started looting and burning. He at once called off the movement and went on a fast for self-purification.

The book deals only with the earlier phases of Gandhiji's life. But it makes us understand as nothing else can the mind of the great leader who led the Indians for half a century in their epic struggle for freedom.

Swami Vivekananda [1863—1902]

Points: 1—His times, his significance. 2—Some events of his life. 3—His contributions.

1. Swami Vivekananda was born at a time when our country had sunk very low. The long foreign rule had made the people dull and spiritless. The masses were poor, hungry and ignorant. They died like flies when floods and famines swept the land. Sometimes an epidemic broke out and took its toll. Worst of all, as a subject people we had lost all our self-respect. We forgot that India had once a glorious past—that she was great in arts, literature, science and commerce with distant lands. Her great religion of the "*Upanishads*" still had a vital message for the unhappy, strife-torn world. Vivekananda made this discovery of India anew and made his countrymen aware of their great tradition. He also made the Western countries aware for the first time of the glory and greatness of India. In America he came to be known as the "*cyclonic Hindu*." He was a wonderful speaker and could sway thousands of people who gathered on many occasions to listen to him. The soul of India, in fact, spoke through him.

2. Before he became a monk, Vivekananda had been known in the world as Narendranath Dutt. He was

a very handsome young man, bright, gay and witty. He however felt deeply puzzled by one question. "*What is God?*"—he would very often ask himself. He would put that question to scholars, philosophers and religious men. Nobody could satisfy him. At last he met the *Saint of Dakshineswara*. He, it is said, made him see the vision of God with a touch.

Narendranath's father had a roaring practice as a lawyer. But he spent money lavishly. When he died suddenly, he left his family penniless. Poor Narendra felt so helpless! Ramkrishna said to him, "*You pray to Goddess Kali and she will give you all the money you want.*" It happened, however, that when Narendra prayed to Kali, he forgot altogether to ask for money or success. He only asked her to give him faith and devotion. Ramkrishna urged him to serve the poor suffering humanity as his God and look for no rewards for himself.

3. Vivekananda in his own life-time organized the Ramkrishna Mission, named after his Master, for service to humanity. The yellow-clad monks of this mission are known all over the world. With bright, cheerful faces, they rush wherever the people are in distress. It may be a flood or a famine or a raging epidemic. They have founded a network of schools, colleges and hospitals all over the country with the same ideal of service to humanity. Vivekananda preached a man-making religion. He told young men, "*You will be nearer to Heaven through playing foot-ball than through prayer.*" Once again he said with his usual force, "*What I want are muscles of iron and nerves of steel.*" There cannot be a more inspiring message for the youth of India.

Life of a Scientist

[Acharya P. C. Roy]

Points: 1—A great teacher. 2—Some aspects of his life. 3—His many-sided achievements. 4—Conclusion.

1. Prafulla Chandra Roy was known in his lifetime to his countrymen as the "*Acharya*" or "*the Great teacher*." A teacher he was above everything else and one of the noblest that we have ever seen. For long years he lived in a small room, all by himself in the Science College of Calcutta. He felt happiest when he was in the midst of his students or working in the laboratory. Some of his gifted students—Saha and Ghosh and Dhar—were inspired by his great example and themselves became scientists of world-wide renown.

Acharya Roy was born in 1861 at Raruli, a small village in Khulna. He was fortunate in both his parents. His father Harischandra Roy was a scholar in Persian and well-known for his noble and generous nature. His mother Bhubanmohini was a sweet lady of great charm. With parents like them, there is little wonder that P. C. Roy came to have such a passion for scholarship, and such a noble and loving soul.

2. He was remarkable even as a student. While still reading for his B.Sc. he won the coveted *Gilchrist Scholarship* and sailed abroad for his studies. He read for his B.Sc. in Chemistry at the Edinburgh University and had his degree in 1885. Only three years later he became a D.Sc. On his return to India he became the Professor of Chemistry at the Presidency College. When the Science College of the Calcutta University came to be founded in 1916, he found the great mission of his life. He organized the Department of Chemistry as nobody else could. Thus began a long and fruitful association which ended only with his death in 1944.

3. Acharya Roy has many titles to fame. He was not only a teacher and scientist. His great contribu-

tions in either of these lines were however, enough to make any man famous. He was in fact, one of the greatest of our nation-builders. He found his own people, the Bengalees, dull, lazy and listless. He felt that the country must either industrialize or perish. To set an example to his people, he organized the Bengal Chemical works, the biggest concern of its kind in the whole of the East.

Whenever the country was stricken by a flood or famine he gave a call for relief to his students. Their response every time was nothing short of marvellous. He fought valiently against "*untouchability*" and whatever vices and corruptions he found in the society of his day. It is mainly due to his great work as a pioneer, that India today is marching ahead with the progressive nations in science and technology.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

1897—?

Points: 1—Patriot and idealist. 2—Some striking incident of his life. 3—Country's call and his activities. 4—Conclusion.

1. Netaji Bose is already a legend to the people of India. In the long history of Indian struggle for freedom, there was hardly ever a leader (that is what Netaji means) of his vision and daring. Freedom was the one great passion of his life. Nothing else mattered. Fame and success and all that men care for, came to him almost unasked. But he brushed them off as less than dust. He fought of nothing but freedom for his country, all the days of his life and he did not think any sacrifice too dear for this great cause.

2. He was born in 1897 at Cuttack in Orissa. His father, a lawyer, had a very big practice and lived in great style. Even as a boy, Subhas had a sturdy sense of independence. His family, like most well-off families

in those days, were given to English ways. Subhas dressed like an English boy. It occurred to him, however, that the Indians too have a national dress of their own. That very day, to everybody's surprise, he threw away his smart English suit and changed over to the homely *dhoti* and *punjabi* which a Bengali boy wears. While a student at Presidency college, Calcutta, he felt greatly provoked by Prof. Oaten, an arrogant Englishman, who had a way of damning India and Indians rather freely in classes. Subhas slapped the man to make him behave better and was turned out of the college for his offence. He was always like that, fiery, reckless and strongly sensitive where the honour of his country was concerned.

3. His family sent him to England to compete for the Indian Civil Service. He came out high up on the list. He had before him a life of dazzling pomp and power which every Indian in those days hankered for. But the call of the country was too strong for him and he flung himself into the struggle for freedom. The British Government of the day found in him their most dangerous enemy and shut him up in prisons for long terms. Whenever he came out, in spite of his shattered health, he led the struggle once again. Twice his countrymen elected him the President of the Indian National Congress. Last time, however, he had differences with the top people of the Congress. He broke away and formed his party, known in history as the Forward Block. On the eve of the World War II he was under house-arrest. He thought it the right moment to strike a blow for the freedom of his country. His life reads like a romance from this point onwards. He slipped out in disguise and fled across the Khyber. He was at last in Germany making contacts with foreign powers. He next made a dash across the Atlantic in a sub-marine and reached Tokyo. He was dashing about in Malaya, Singapur and Burma raising funds and building up his "*Azad Hind Fouz*." He actually led his army to the very gates of India with the watchword of "*Delhi Chalo*." But the battle went against

him. The report goes that he died in an air-crash while flying to a theatre of war from Tokyo. But many of his countrymen believe that he is still alive and will once again return to them.

4. In his army, Tamils, Gujratis, Marathis, Beharis and Bengalees fought as soldiers under a single banner. He forged the unity of India. That is his great lesson to this unhappy country today fighting over language and boundary issues.

Time is money

Points: 1—Passion for wealth. 2—Need of hard work for earning money. 3—How a businessman works for wealth. 4—How a nation works for wealth.

1. Dr. Johnson spoke with contempt about some people whose one aim in life was "to get rich beyond the dreams of avarice." Some people, no doubt, make money the sole passion of their lives. It is not a very worthy ideal. Nor is money always earned by worthy means. People sometimes stoop to very mean and nasty practices just to add a little more to their bank-balance. Still we cannot dismiss all thoughts of money with philosophic contempt. We can hardly do any good either to ourselves or to others unless we have enough money to spend.

2. It is, however, unfortunately true that there is no easy way of earning money. We may win a lottery. Or, a rich uncle may leave us a lot of money by *will*. Or, we may hit upon a treasure-trove while digging in our back-garden. But such accidents are the rarest possible and seldom occur outside story-books. Ordinarily people have to work as hard as they can for money. And money happens to be the most powerful incentive for work today.

3. It is only by a judicious use of time that people can hope to add to their fortune. A businessman or

an industrialist, more than anybody else has to go by a strict time-table. Every minute of his working day is fully booked up. He has to look over his files, read a lot of correspondence, dictate replies to his typist. He has to ring up people, receive visitors by appointment, go round making business contacts. He has to check up his accounts, keep an eye on his workers and see that sales or production do not drop. His credit will badly suffer if he fails to deliver the goods to his customers on the day he has promised.

4. The world is getting more and more competitive. If a man gets slack and lazy, he is sure to overcome by his keener rivals and forced to leave the field to them. All over the world, the mills and factories work round the clock to produce as much wealth for their country as they can. The workers turn up by shifts to keep the work going without a break day in, day out. India is committed to the biggest possible production drive in the Third Five-Year Plan. We have set ourselves big targets in steel and cotton-goods, petroleum and food stuffs. We have actually to work against time. The next five years will see the whole country humming with activity. The Third Plan, in fact, brings home to all of us with unmistakable force the truth of this good old proverb "*Time is money.*"

